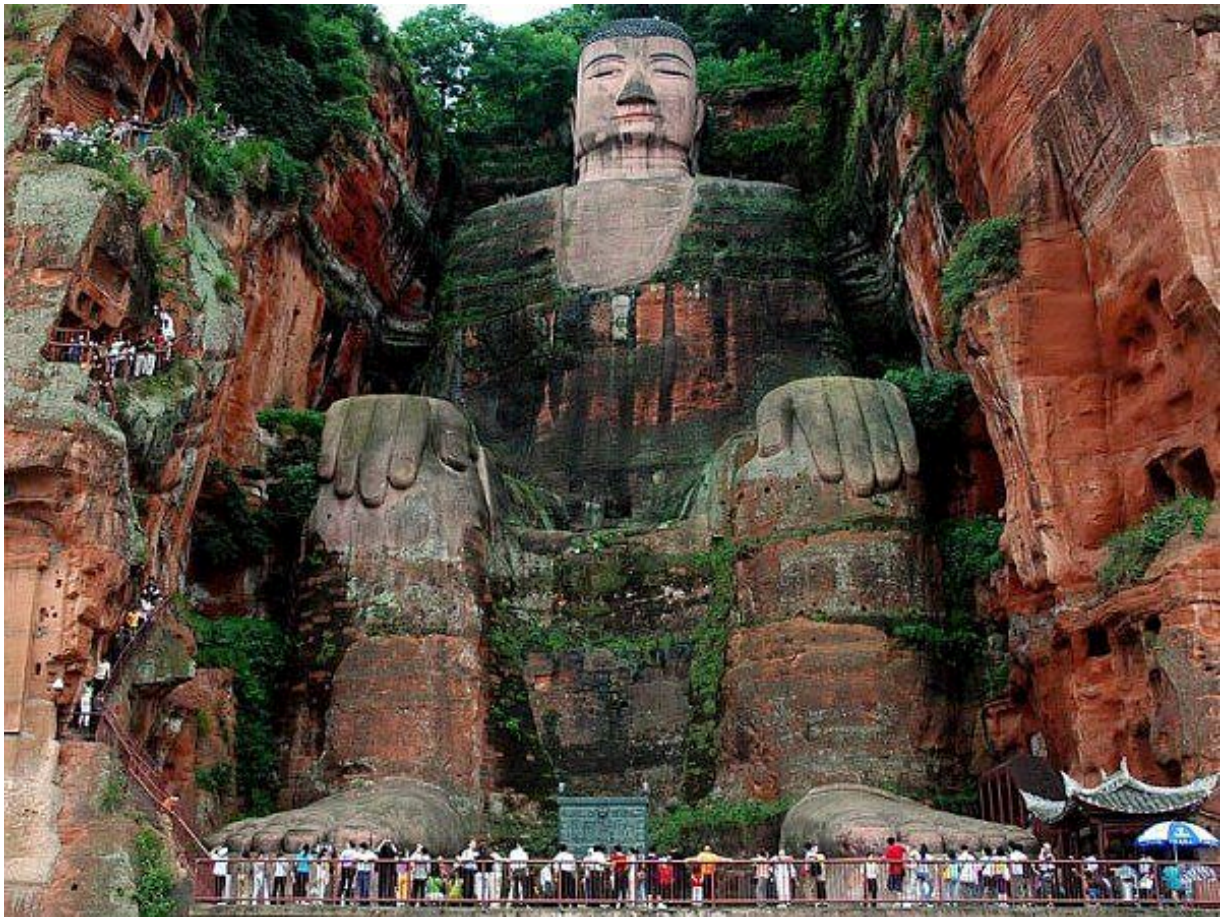
DECLINE AND FALL OF

BUDDHISM

(A tragedy in Ancient India)



Dr. K. Jamanadas

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*"In every country there are two catogories of peoples one 'EXPLOITER' who is winner hence rule that country and other one are 'EXPLOITED' or defeated oppressed commoners.If you want to know true history of any country then listen to oppressed commoners. In most of cases they just know only what exploiter wants to listen from them, but there always remains some philosophers, historians and leaders among them who know true history.They do not tell edited version of history like Exploiters because they have nothing to gain from those Editions."….*SAMAYBUDDHA

DECLINE AND FALL OF BUDDHISM
(A tragedy in Ancient India)
By **Dr. K. Jamanadas**

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DECLINE AND FALL OF BUDDHISM

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Author's Preface

On the verge of Third Millenium

The begining of third millenium coincides with golden jubilee of our so called "independence"? Is it not time, we evaluate our achievements and failures in the light of promises made to ourselves in the Constitution, that there will be Justice, Liberty, Equality and Fraternity for each and every citizen irrespective of their caste, creed, religion or gendre, so that dignity of individual and unity and integrity of nation be preserved?

After fifty years of self rule and democracy, has the developement reached the huts of the common man? Have the masses from deprived and neglected classes of the society, on whose strength the battle of freedom struggle was fought by the leaders, got a taste of fruits of independence? In spite of financial prosperity of nation, have the disparities been reduced? In spite of development plans, is there any economic emancipation or social and political power in real sense for the SCs, STs, OBCs, landless labourers, small and marginal farmers, artisans, workers - the real producers of wealth?

What is the remedy?

The history of India is the history of struggle between higher and lower castes since centuries. All the tensions among the society are the results of graded inequality of Brahmanic Social Order. To get relief from the oppression from the *"savarna"* dominance, the only remedy is political power. What is the meaning of Independence? To the multitude of masses it means the relief from the *"savarna"* oppression. The economic emancipation is definitely a part of aim in the struggle. But the crux of the matter is mainly the social aspect. One must make a differentiation between social justice and social transformation.

Only by comprehension of Brahmanism one can understand the past history of this country. Brahmanism is the social system of graded inequality but is supported and justified on the basis of religion. The majority of masses, the bahujans, donot understand this and they become meek supporters of oppressive social system in the name of religion. There are two strong weapons in the hands of Brahmanism to oppress the bahujans. They are the concepts of destiny and god. The false ideas of hell and heaven deny the bahujans the achievements of this world, they become inactive and get oppressed by the BSO. The brahmanic system has made the original inhabitant of this land the most depressed and

reduced them to a deplorable condition by breaking them into innumerable small castes and deprived them of all wealth, prosperity, human dignity and happiness.

What is the gist of Brahmanism

We have been using various terms like *"Brahmanism, brahmanya, brahman vaad, manuvaad, sanatanism, orthodoxy"* etc. Now a days, all these words are replaced by *"hindutwa"* or some new terms like *"bharatyatwa"* or *"rastriyatwa"* or "national" and so on and so forth. Unfortunately each author uses the term in a sense known to or understood by him only and his interpretation is either unknown to the masses in general or unaccepted by them. Under these circumstances, it becomes imperative to depict the exact meaning of the word.

The cardinal tenets of *"Hindutwa"*

There are some who clasify *"Hindutwa"* in three types, (1) of Aribindo and Vivekananda, (2) of Sawarkar and (3) of RSS propounded by Golwalkar. We feel all this discussion is an eyewash to hoodwink the masses. Neither of them started it, and their interests in interpreting it differently, if at all they did as claimed, had arisen out of political needs of the time. Those interested may see writings of Raosaheb Kasbe against this thinking. For our purpose, *"Hindutwa"* of any and all types have certain cardinal points, and they are:

1. Chaturvarna: This is the main feature. The society must be divided into four water tight compartments called Brahmin, kshatriya, vaishya and shudra, and that the entry to them is only through birth. It is like a tower with four floors without any staircase. There are many conceptions for this system. It is a devinely ordained system, it was made by god. It is the duty of human beings to follow this system without expecting any returns from it. Your duty is only to do the *"karmas,"* i.e. the deeds related to following the *"chaturvarna"*. This is the devinely ordained *"dharma"*. When this *"dharma"* gets dormant, god takes birth to puninish the evil, i.e. those who disturbed the *"dharma"* and preserve those who are *"sadhus"*, i.e. those who follow this *"dharma"*. It must not be confused with the division of labour. This is not the division of labour but division of labourers. Under this system you are allowed to marry only within your own caste, and you are also required to follow the calling of your ancesters, how so ever it may be fearsome. It is better to die in the calling of your ancesters than to follow others' profession. Because it is alwys better to die in your own inferior *"dharma"* than a better one of others', which is always fearsome. It means the daughter of a prostitute must become a prostitute and son of a

pimp must become a pimp. A scavenger's son may take education and become a doctor but he must earn his living not by working as a physician but must earn his livelihood by scavenging. Only he must become an expert in scavenging. This is the summary of *"Chaturvarna."* Even now there are supprters to this theory.

2. Supremacy of god: As the theory of caste is put forward by god almighty himself, it can not be challenged. Afterall god is the one who has created the universe. Nothing moves in this world without his wish. Not even a leaf of a tree moves without his wish. How is this theory put into action by god? Ofcourse according to the deeds of the past life's deeds. If you have folloewd the *"chaturvarna"* in the past life, you have accumulated enough virtue to make you, that is your *"atma"*, to have a body of a higher *"varna"*. Afterall, you are of no consequence. It is your *"atma"* that is the thing of great importance. It is your *"atma"* which is "real you". It is separate from your body. Though you are not your *"atma"*, the *"karmas"*, that is the deeds of chaturvarna, have to be followed by the body. It is very simple theory. When you die, it is the body that dies. The *"atma"* goes to another body, just like you change your shirt, *"atma"* changes its garment. This *"atma"* does not die, it can not be cut by weapons, neither it can be burned by fire, nor it can be desicated by wind. What ever physical birth you are having now is due to your deeds in previous birth. If you did "good deeds" meaning respecting caste rules, you would be born in higher caste, otherwise you would be born in a lower one. The idea is that you must not grumble about your present situation, it is all arranged by the God himself taking into consideration the deeds of your previous birth.

3. Belief in Infaliability of "Sastras": It is very essential to make this rule so that God and Chaturvarna could be supported, because all the above is stored in Brahmin's books, prohibited to others.

4. Belief in visit to holy places: Also neccesary to keep the supply line of provisions to piestly class, so that they can go on writing *"sastras"* for the governing of rest of the society, and

5. Bath in *"Ganga"* washes all sins: Very essential to empower the priests to lure masses to visit the *"tirthas"*, the places of pilgrimae, spread all over the country. Very useful device to deprive the bahujan of what ever has been accumulated by him and also to indoctrinate him in Manu's way of thinking.

These were the mehanisms used by the Brahmins to dominate the Bahujans. And these were the very things opposed by the Buddhists from times immemorial.

Indian History

Ancient Indian History is not only illuminating, but it throws ample light on the happenings of today. One finds that from times immemorial, the struggle between the so called upper caste *"savarnas"* on one side and the rest of population on other side is going on. It had assumed different names, shapes and forms during the course of different periods of history, and the history of India is nothing but the history of conflict between these two ideologies, as is well demonstrated by Dr. Ambedkar. The present day protagonists of these are Phuley, Shahu and Ambedkar on one side and Tilak, Gandhi and Golwalkar on the other. **These are the only two ideologies in present day India, and sooner the people understand this, earlier they will be freed from their slavery.**

Bahujan philosophy

To relieve the humanity from suffering, in India, the remedy is to develop the spirit of Bahujan Samaj. We cannot progress by merely "Dalit Unity", or by only "Dalit Muslim Unity", or by only "Dalit Christian Unity", we have to build a Bahujan Samaj, which is not an easy task. One has to understand the mechanics of Bahujan Samaj. One has to understand Bahujan Philosophy with all its intricacies, for which the study of life and literature of *"Great Heroes"* of Bahujan Samaj like Phule, Shahu, Ambedkar, Periyar, Ayyankali, Gurucharan Thakur, Narayana Guru and hundreds of others who fought for the cause and showed the way, and follow it with study of Kanshiram and his movement.

Social service and social transformation

This is the important point which one must understand. Medical ethics says, prevention is better than cure. Instead of curing a disease give more attention to its prevention. To mend a fracture is social service, to create environment so that fractures do not take place is social transformation. To give vitamin pills to malnourished Adivasi children is social service, to give their parents employment so that they can buy wholesome food for their children is social transformation. To give charity to a beggar is social service, to create social atmosphere so that nobody has to beg is social change. To give rice at Rs. two per kilo when market price is Rs.7/- is social service, to raise the income of the person so that he can buy the rice at market price is social change. To feed the hungry is social service,

to create situation where nobody remains hungry is social change. To teach an illiterate is social service, to destroy the social structure which made him illiterate is social change. To open a new school in thee vicinity of an illiterate poor colony of *"zopadpatti"* could be social service, to motivate the poor hungry and illiterate man to send his child to school walking five kilometers away even on an empty stomach is social transformation. To protect a weak person by giving him weapons is social service, to make him strong enough to let him manufacture and use his own weapons is social change. To teach an egalitarian prayer to a school child may be social service, to dynamite the scriptures spreading inequality among human beings is a social change. To assure protection to scared minorities may be social justice, to give them power so that they can defend themselves is social transformation.

I have a great respect for missionaries who did a tremendous amount of good work. If there were no missionaries, there would have been no Phule, no Shahu and no Ambedkar, let alone Kanshiram and Mayawati. In my humble opinion, missionaries in India are doing social service, and are the very best at that, even at the cost of their own lives. But still it is not social transformation. I think here lies the importance of a movement which stands for **not social service or social justice alone but for social transformation and economic emancipation**.

Supporters of Child Labour

There was an international demand that all goods to be exported should be certified to the effect that no child labour was involved. The then Prime Minister of India, Narsimha Rao, had refused to sign such an understanding. Why? Because it did not concern his people. Even in recent times, talks in International fora on Trade broke down on Child Labour and Enviornment, both the problems of masses.

Caste System contributed to child Labour in India : UNICEF

The above is the heading of a small news item published some time back in news papers. It reflects a lot on the ills India is facing. It is only a survey of child Labour problem, but if one ponders over it one would know the real problem India is facing. The news item runs as under:

NEW DELHI, Jan. 7, (UNI) The rigidity of the caste system in India has, among other things, contributed to the mushrooming of child labour in the country, says the UNICEF. In the report "The state of the world's children", the UNICEF said the dominant cultural group in India might not wish its own children to do hazardous labour but it would not be so

concerned if young people from racial, ethnic or economic minorities did it. Citing the magnitude of child labour, it said, "In India, the view has been that some people are born to rule and to work with their minds while others, the vast majority, are born to work with their bodies." "Many traditionalists had been unperturbed about lower-caste children failing to enroll in or dropping out of school," the UNICEF said, adding "and if these children end up doing hazardous labour, it is likely to be seen as their lot in life." The UNICEF's observation came against the backdrop of the recent supreme court judgment banning child labour in hazardous and non-hazardous industries. He said the technique being used in glass industry should be upgraded. The Government of India had sanctioned an amount of Rs. 12.86 lakh on the basis of a report by the ITI Kanpur. According to a survey conducted to find out labours engaged in glass industry of Faizabad, 18,126 child labourers and 316 suspected were found, in which 13,199 were boys and 7,843 were girls. The number of affected families was 15,919. The meeting was also informed that 12,900 of five development blocks of Ferozabad had been admitted to various educational centres and they were getting benefit mid-day scheme." [*"Hitavada"*, Nagpur, 8th Jan.97]

Cultural Groupism in India

Before we understand the problem, we analyze the various cultural ethnic groups mentioned above. Dr. Ambedkar, who was an authority on caste, has clarified the population of India is divided into (A) avarnas and (B) savarnas. Savarnas are 1. dwijas i.e. Brahmins, Ksatriyas and Vaisyas, the so called Upper Castes (UCs) and 2. the Shudras, the so called BCs, a whole lot of miscellaneous amorphous castes. The Avarnas are a. Scheduled Castes (SCs) b. Scheduled Tribes (STs) c. Criminal (ex) tribes (VJ) and Nomadic Tribes (NT) and d. minorities like Muslims, Christians, Sikhs and Buddhists. The UCs are about 15% and the rest are about 85%. and these days are called 'bahujans'.

The UNICEF Report only deals with problem of Child Labour, but it alludes to many problems eg. Problem of Illiteracy, malnutrition, prostitution and that too having sanction of religion, beggary, disease. The report shows why the benefits of planning are not reaching the masses. It should show why judicial results are not doing justice, it could show the root cause of corruption. It shows the main reason, why the Indian elite think the way they do. It shows why there was a struggle going on for centuries between two ideologies. It shows why India smarted under foreign yoke for centuries. It shows all the ills of India originated from the Caste system with graded inequality, with the Brahmin at the helm of

affairs and the rest suffering under these 15 percent so called higher castes.

The literacy rate of India is so poor that she has the largest number of illiterates in the world. Why is it so? From times immemorial, Brahmins taught to the masses that all knowledge was stored in Vedas. In consequence, those who were not supposed to read the Vedas had no purpose of learning to read and write. Hence the preponderance of illiteracy. That you find a few literates among the non-Brahmins these days, is due to work of Fuley, Shahu and Ambedkar. And one has to thank the British rule also for that. But the fundamental point remains, that the upper castes do not like the other castes to get education. Many policies adopted by the rulers emanate from this feeling. Even a caste war was fought in Gujarath on the point of reservations to Backward castes in Educational Institutes. The war over Mandal Commission is not yet over. The problem of illiteracy is not the problem of upper castes, it is the problem of backward castes, and unless it is addressed as such, it cannot be solved.

India has got the largest number of blinds in the world. Nearly half the blind population of the World is in India. Why the proper treatment facilities are not made available? Because, again most of these people are backward castes, and the upper castes do not bother to ameliorate the conditions of these people for they are not their *"own"* men.

The problem of malnutrition and deaths due to hunger are typically problems of SCs and STs, and so is the problem of beggary. Almost all the beggars are backward caste people. Almost all the prostitutes are similarly of the same castes. The hutment dwellers in urban slums, the "refugees within the same country", i.e. migration from villages to cities, is the problem of "*zopadpatti*" (slums), which again is a problem of *"bahujans"*. The problem of landless labours is also same. So is the problem of juvenile delinquency.

All these are real problems for the masses, but these are always ignored by the ruling class. But the things are changing fast. All the backward caste people are opening their eyes. They are awakening. They can now understand what Phuley, Shahu, Ambedkar have advised them. The days of Brahmin supremacy and Chaturvarna domination are numbered, and that number is a small one. No amount of Gobel's propaganda by supporters of Child labour like Zunzunwalas and his kind is now going to work.

Tricks employed by BSO to divert the attention of the oppressed

It is well known but not well realized by the leaders is the fact that BSO always tries to divert the attention of Bahujans away from the real issues. The issue of population explosion, or environment, or women liberation, or *"mandir"* and *"masjid"* were regularly used for this purpose. But recently they are discussing reservation and review of the Constitution under this scheme. Various questions are raised and their answers depicting both pro and anti arguments are advanced by the same people, construed for their own benefit. The aim is to divert the attention of gullible *"Bahujans"* away from real issues, they should not try to find out and know the alternative institutions, concepts and social order, so that they should keep away from the revolutionary politics, they should not even dream of historical and social possibilities, they should not realize the realistic comprehension of socio political scenario, they should not realize the dark inside of the political and bureaucratic decisions and policies and not realize the castiest and selfish motives of the rulers. In light of this the bahujans always forget that the rulers have purposefully refrained from implementing land reforms, implementing banning of bonded labour practices, implementing labour laws for uniform and minimum basic wages, implementing labour laws for landless labours, enforcing anti-child labour laws, implementing strict free and compulsory primary and secondary education, prevent drop outs from the schools, provide free health, shelter and potable water and sanitation facilities for all. If these things were implemented, the bahujans would have been in a much better position than they are now.

The crux of the matter is that the main reason for this is that there is no political will, and why so? The only reason is, as is now realised by masses that the rulers have caste prejudices. The problems given above are not their problems. Has anyone seen an illiterate, or a bonded labour, or school drop out, or a malnourished child, or a child labour, or a street beggar, or a commercial sex worker from the ruling castes? Has anybody wondered why the Chakma refugees had to suffer but Kashmiri Pundit refugees received a much better treatment, to the extent of sending them to represent "Indigenous People" of India, to UNO?

Since how long the Problems are present?

The problems are present not since the British regime started. As a matter of fact the problems got alliviated since the Britishers came. The British Rule, though a foreign rule, was much liked by masses than the Brahmin Raj, of Peshawas for example in Maharashtra, where not only non-Brahmins, but even the Brahmin women became happy when *"Peshawai"* ended. Actually, the problems started with the decline and fall of Buddhism, the greatest tragedy in the anals of Indian Nation.

The purpose of this writing is to show that real causes of ruin of Indian nation was fall of Buddhism, and the various means adopted by Brahmins to keep the supremacy of their caste and the sequllae of it which haunted this land for centuries and perhaps are going to haunt for another few centuries. This is an humble effort to highlight some of the ills faced by Indian masses, and suggest the historical back ground of their suffering so that they could find the solutions for future. As is explained by an eminent scholar from University of Miami:

"Historical Research can provide us not only with hypotheses for the solutions of current problems, but also with a greater appreciation of the culture and of the role which education is to play in the progress of society. ... An understanding of historical background should save education from making the same mistakes. Thus historical research can act as a control in policy making. ... historian generally would not be satisfied with mere discovery of truth, but would conceive his primary resposibility as a scientist to be the interpretation of the data in order to link the past to the present and to the future." [Mouley:1963:205]

Dr. Ambedkar tried to educate the masses by writting a number of books on socio-cultural history, some of which were published years after his death. It was expected a healthy debate would ensue to go to root of the ills. One of them was "The Riddles of Hinduism(Brahminism)" written to show how Brahmins have put the OBCs in a great quagmire. But on one riddle, heat was raised by the supporters of *"Chaturvarnya"* and a number of lives were lost on sentimental issues. But no debate ensued on the real issues and no answers are found to the riddles raised by him even after so many years. The solutions to these *"Riddles"* are not going to be found by the UCs, they have to be found by those who are suffering.

I am sure such solutions will be found. The masses are awakening. They are realising the causes of their suffering, and they are trying to fight. The fight has not finished as yet, It is just starting. To quote the final verse of a marathi song:- *"The final class war has not yet come to Bharat; when it does we will fight not on the side of the Kaurus nor the Pandavas but the long neglected Eklavya will take up bow and arrow to establish his state."* [Translated from a Marathi poet's song by Gail Omvedt, *"Oppressed Indian"*, August 1980, p.24]

Dr. K. Jamanadas

Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

Depicting Buddha as Hindu

For a last few years, Sangha activists are trying to depict to the international community, that they respect the Buddha. While doing that they use terminology depicting him as a Hindu. About Ambedkar also, similar thing is seen, books are written to show the work of Hegdewar and Ambedkar was same. We find Shankaracharyas garlanding the photo of Dr. Ambedkar. We find Brahmanic dignitaries like Sankaracharya paying a visit to Nagpur Diksha-bhoomi to pay tributes. And the recent incident is well known that RSS supremo Sudarshan garlanded the statue of Ambedkar - the maker of the Indian Constitution - on Deekshabhoomi at Nagpur, and the Ambedkarites have washed and "purified" the statue "poluted" by touch of someone who condemns the Constitution.

Declaring Buddha as an avatara of god was the beginning

They declared the Buddha as an *avatara* of Vishnu, some times around eighth century, as a verse to this effect from Matsya Purana is engraved in a monument at Mahabalipuram. The process seems to be completed by the time of Jaydeo writing "Gita Govind" in 12th century, including Buddha's name in it as an "Avatara". We are also aware that an average Brahmin takes a great pride that Buddhism was driven away from this land by Adi- Sankara.

How a non-existent religion can die?

Declaring the Buddha as ninth *avatara* of Vishnu, L. M. Joshi observes, was a "remarkable cultural feat", achieved by the Brahmanic Puranas, which later caused confusion in the minds of people with the result that Buddhism came to

be treated as a "heretical" and "aesthetic" branch of Brahmanism. The present scholars like P. V. Kane, Radhakrishnan and even Swami Vivekanand, have pushed this confusion further back to the time of origin of Buddhism, by saying that Upanishadas are the origin of Buddhist thought. To this list must be added the name of B. G. Tilak, who devoted a full chapter in "Gita Rahashya" to prove that Buddhism was an off-shoot of Hinduism(Brahminism), (and one more chapter for proving that Christianity arose from Buddhism and hence eventually from Hinduism(Brahminism)). Commenting Swami Vivekanada's statement that the Swami and other Hindus did not understand Buddha's teachings to be an honest confession, Joshi observes:

"... Not only the ancient and medieval brahmin teachers did not understand Buddhism; modern scholars born into the Brahmanical tradition have not shown any better understanding. Shankara, Kumarila, Udayana, and Sayana-Madhava did not understand Buddhism. This is true also of Tagore, Gandhi, Coomaraswamy and Radhakrishnan. ..." [L.M.Joshi:1973:12]

Showing a great surprise of Brahmanic scholars claiming both that Buddhism was just a refined "Hinduism(Brahminism)", and also claiming with pride that Buddhism was driven away by the Brahmanas and it has died down, he sarcastically observes:

"... The causes of the decline of Buddhism in India are attributed either to Tantrika practices or to Muslim invasion, or to both. Nobody even imagines that if Buddhism were only a "reformed" or "refined" version of "Hinduism(Brahminism)" how it could be said to have declined and died away while "Hinduism(Brahminism)" is still flourishing and is the faith of majority of Indians. Buddhism can be said to have declined only when there was evidence for its existence at a certain period in Indian history apart from the existence of "Hinduism(Brahminism)". If Buddhism did not exist apart from Brahmanism or "Hinduism(Brahminism)" it did not die at all. **A non-existent tradition or way of life does not die. The theory of decline of Buddhism, from the standpoint of "traditional" history is a false theory. On the other hand, if the decline of Buddhism in India was a historical fact, the theory of its origin as a "reformed" Brahmanism is a false one and must be discarded.**" [Ibid. p.14]

If Buddhism was a sect of "Hinduism(Brahminism)", then one may well ask the proud supporters of Shankaracharya, what was that religion which was "driven out by Adi Sankara", as they claim? Was it also Hinduism(Brahminism)?

Buddhism is not a sect of Hinduism(Brahminism)

As Swami Dharmatirtha observed, in an answer to those writers, who have treated Buddhism as a sect of Hinduism(Brahminism), that we do not know of any Hinduism(Brahminism) having existed before the Buddha and if Hinduism(Brahminism) did not exist, Buddhism could not have been a sect of it. There was the Brahman religion of sacrifices, confined to a small Aryan community, and the common people had their ancient religion of some sort of hero worship and ancestor worship and images. Both these were domestic, neither the public yajnyas of Brahmins nor the temples of tribal Indians were in existance. Swamiji feels:

"... Buddhism was a revolt against both the prevailing systems. In fact it was the first organized religion in the modern sense of the term "religion". It succeeded in driving out the Brahman religion of sacrifices, but gradually succumbed to the influences of the popular religion. Its final absorption in the primitive religion was due to the fact that the Brahmans favoured the religion of gods and goddesses and rituals, and not the religion of righteousness. [Swami Dharmatirtha:1946:109]

Buddhism was the national Religion of India

Well, inspite of what these elitits say, decline of Buddhism is a historical fact, and was the cause of all ills, India had to face in the past. That the ills of common people of India today are due to the decline and fall of Buddhism in historical times, is not well understood by the masses, and how it affected the life of common people and what kind of miseries the subsequent generations had to suffer, is a subject which not many scholars have given much thought to.

The fact that at one time Buddhism was the national religion of India and was followed by the majority of population, is almost forgotten. There is a feeling in the minds of many, that India is and was a Hindu country having always had a majority of Hindus. This again is a misconception. In historical times the population of India never had majority of Hindus. Swami Vivekananda, estimated Buddhists to be two thirds of population [L.M.Joshi:1977:358] and Dr. Ambedkar says Buddhist were in majority. [W&S,vol.7,p.345] Then there were Jains and Veerashaivas and Tribal religions in addition to Muslims, Sikhs and Christians coming in the later times.

That Buddhism was not only the faith practiced by majority of people but had

eclipsed Brahmanism to a great extent and the Brahmins had lost all the respect of masses as well as princely rulers. They were smarting under this defeat. [W&S,vol.7,p.346] They did everything in their power to finish off Buddhism and after Muslim invasion, succeeded in it. Thus Buddhism disappeared to a great extent from the land of its origin. Buddhism was the national religion of India, not only because the Buddha was an Indian, descended from an Indian king of the Sakya clan, but as observed by Swami Dharma Teertha:

"... because Buddhism was the source and inspiration of the national awakening witnessed in the Indian empires and kingdoms which controlled the destinies of the country for over a thousand years; because Buddhism, for the first time, united India in a common cultural synthesis and organization; because unlike Brahmanism, which was the religion of the privileged classes, Buddhism was the first religion of the common people, not forced on them, but accepted by their free will and pleasure; because Buddhism brought out in the fullest measure the immense potentialities of the nation in all its manifold aspects - science and art, literature and religion, commerce and industry, internal progress and international reputation; and lastly, because no other religion has till this day been able to make India a great nation as Buddhism did. [p.76]

Brahmins usurped Buddhism

Brahmans became the leaders of Buddhism because of their learning, and first disfigured it thoroughly with ritualism and images, and then destroyed its separate organization of monasteries and monks with the help of the foreign masters who came into power. But the Buddhism of Harsha and Nagarjuna did not disappear, it formed the nucleus of the later Hinduism(Brahminism), superadded with horrors of caste. To become the sole leaders of the country and to enforce their system of castes, has always been the prime motive of Brahmanism, and if Buddhist order of monks and monasteries had survived, the Brahmins could not have achieved this goal. So they completely destroyed the external institution of Buddhism, the monks and monasteries. Brahmins became the undisputed leaders, and a new popular religion, Hinduism(Brahminism), emerged with important aspect of caste, as Dharmatitha observed:

"... Caste is an entirely independent social order which was neither in the ancient Aryan religion nor in primitive Indian religion nor in Buddhism. **It is the unique contribution of the Brahman priests, and none else ever wanted**

it, until the country lost its national religion and political freedom, and the Brahmans succeeded in imposing the system upon the people almost at the point of the bayonet with of alien masters. [p.110]

Brahmanism does not mean Brahmins alone

Lest there should be any misunderstanding about the term Brahmanism and other derivatives of it, it must be clearly understood, what is meant by this term. Swami Dharma Teertha made it clear:

"British Imperialism does not mean the British people; it symbolizes a vast system and has numerous votaries among Indians also. Brahmanism, similarly, does not signify the Brahmans exclusively, but an ancient order of things of which the Brahmans are the leaders and champions. It stands for the aggregate of ideals, institutions and past history of the socio-religious constitution of the Hindu society. At the same time, we should not lose sight of the fact that the cause we have to serve is the welfare of the entire nation and not the sentiment of separate classes or castes. If, therefore, some of us Brahmans, or Kshatriyas or others have to accept a larger share of the blame for the disaster which has befallen us all, we should not hesitate to welcome the opportunity. That circumstance should be an incentive to put forth still greater efforts to right the wrong we have done. It is the system which is throttling us all equally, it is that pernicious system that is the subject of our criticisms. [p.11]

A prominent thinker of Maharashtra, Raosaheb Kasbe, has elaborated the subject by saying that, Brahmins are fortunte that, "Brahmin" is a name of Caste as well as of a "Varna", thereby implying Class, this status being bestowed upon them by Smritis. As a class and as a power structure, Brahmins have developed vested interests. Dalit writers divide the history as Brahmin Vs. non-Brahmin, instead of Vedic Vs. non-Vedic, and when the words having Brahmin as one of their components are used by them to criticise these vested interests, the meaning implied is against the power structure and not agaist the caste. If this is a blameworthy mistake, the mistake is committed by the authors of Smritis, specially "Yama smriti", and they and the later authors desrve the blame. [Kasbe Raosaheb:1994:242]

Causes of fall of Buddhism

Before coming to the effects of fall of Buddhism, which is the main subject matter of this tract, we will briefly the discuss the various causes that led to this

tragedy which befell on this country. As exclaimed by L. M. Joshi, this "tragedy" is mostly "overlooked or confused", [L.M.Joshi:1977:xvii] and ignored or distorted by the elite of this land for selfish caste motives.

M. M. Kane's views

Maha Mahopadhyaya Dr. P. V. Kane summarizes the various reasons for the decline and ultimate fall of Buddhism from the land of its origin. Like all other Brahmanic scholars, he denies the Brahmanic crusade against Buddhism as the main cause. He mentions various reasons important being the following: [Kane:1980:400]

1. The debates in four Buddhist councils one after the other till Kaniska and the resultant differences of opinion within the Buddhist scholars.

2. End of royal patronage after the reign of Harshavardhana.

3. Important scholars of Buddhism left the country.

4. The high moral set up by the Buddha were found to be too cumbersome for the followers. The monasteries of bhikkus and bhikkunis became the places of laziness and immoral behaviour and lowly tantric practices. Sexual intercourse became the part of their 'yoga saadhanaa'.

5. To oppose Buddhism and to popularize Hinduism(Brahminism), Brahmins had to make revolutionary changes in the nature and practices of their religion, in the early and later centuries of Christian Era and make changes in their religion having long lasting effects.

6. Gods and goddesses in Vedic pantheon were discarded and yadnyas were almost abandoned. Puranic mantras were being used even in the *shraadhha*. The tenets of *ahimsa, daana, tirth yaatraa*, and *vratas* got more importance than the *yajnyas*. By these changes, importance of Buddhism was reduced to a great extent.

7. People started liking the stories in Puranas in preference to those in Buddhist Jatakas.

8. From about 7th century, Buddha was included in the list of Avataras and by about tenth century, the fact was acknowledged all over India.

9. Around 1200 A.D., the destruction of Buddhist Universities and killings of

Bhikkus, the lay Buddhist got confused. Some of them became Muslims and some became "Hindus".

10. It is mentioned in "Chulla vagga", that some times, in big monasteries, the *bhikkunis* used to quarrel and fight amongst themselves.

11. Apart from these causes, the main reason was in reality different according to Dr. Kane. And it was that the people at large did not find it possible to follow the Buddha's advice of accepting asceticism, which according to Hindu sastras was denounced.

12. When Buddhists started worshiping Buddha as God, and accepted *bhakti* denouncing old eight fold Buddhist path, the differences between Hinduism(Brahminism) and Buddhism gradually vanished.

13. Brahmins incorporated among their religion such as sanyas, worshiping of many gods, '*karma marg*' as a means of higher spiritual stage. Thus Brahmins gave their religion very broad character.

14. Puranas and dharma sastras gave so much importance to 'ahimsa' that not only Brahmins, but also vaishyas and shudras accepted vegetarianism. On the contrary, in no other country the Buddhists are purely vegetarians.

Views of other scholars

Before Harshvardhana of seventh century, Buddhism had suffered a lot at the hands of Brahmanism. However, Jagdish Kumar, rather unjustifiably, likes to exclude the persecution of Buddhists by Pushyamitra Shunga (184 B.C.), saying that there is uncertainty about it, mentioning an essay by Nalinaksha Dutta in "Mahabodhi" of June 1955. But he also agrees about religious persecution by Nara, a Kashmir ruler of first century B.C. and by Huna ruler, Mihirkula (510-530 A.D.) [Jagadish Kumar:1981:13]

After Harsha, the situation became very harassing for the Sangha, which was used to lead a life under royal patronage, as per "2500 years of Buddhism". (p.65) This was rather a life of comfort, if not of luxury, avers Jagdish Kumar. [p.14].

We get the glimpses of this decline from Chinese travellers. "The latter (I-Ching) frankly deplores the decay of the faith, which he had witnessed in his own life (i.e. about 650-770 A.D.) but his travels in India were relatively of small extent and he gives less local information than previous piligrims. Hsuan

Chuang describing India in 629-645 A.D. is unwilling to admit the decay, but his truthful narrative lets it be seen." [Hinduism(Brahminism) and Buddhism, vol II, pp.107-8, quoted by Jagdish Kumar, p.14]

Caliber of Vajrayani Buddhists

As Dr. Rupa Kulkarni Bodhi, a Sanskrit scholar from Nagpur University, who has adopted Buddhism, very aptly observed that the Buddhist Sanskrit literature is the most neglected. Brahmins hate it as it is anti-Brahmanic, scholars of Pali Prakrit or Buddhist studies keep away from it, and Ambedkarites feel it is meant for a dust bin, as it is Mahayanist. [Bodhi:1999:7] Anyway, Tibetans do not consider Vajrayan and Mahayan different from each other. Under these circumstances, Siddha Literature has been neglected by all, and because of its esoteric teachings, it condemned by everyone. This is not proper. It definitely deserves more attention, as it was the literature of "masses" rather than "classes" and secondly it was the last Buddhist literature in India, before its disappearance and has historical importance.

It is claimed by the Brahmanical scholarship of the present day, that the quality and caliber of Buddhist leadership declined after seventh or eighth century. This could be true partially as far as the reading of Vedas is concerned. If you consider that the leadership of Buddhist Sangha was in the hands of people of higher castes and the Bhikkus had a background of knowledge of Vedic studies along with the reading of Tripitakas. This was the situation even in the times of Itsing. But as far as principles of Buddhism are concerned, these leaders made no compromises. One appreciable difference in leadership of Buddhism that can be seen palpably is that when the leadership passed on to the Vajrayani Siddhas of esoteric Buddhism, these leaders almost all belonged to lower castes, in contrast to Mahayanis, who mostly came from Brahmin caste.

Though Buddha never believed in supremacy of any caste, and also the caste distinctions were not acute in earlier times, the Brahmins by this time had enclosed themselves into an endogamous group and became a caste from a varna. By the time of Gupta rule, the untouchability was added to this caste consciousness. It had started as an outcome of contempt and hatred towards Buddhists, as is well shown by Dr. Ambedkar. Most of the later leaders of Buddhism hailed from these non-Brahmanic castes as can be seen from the list of Siddhas. This is perhaps the cause of blame by higher caste scholars.

The Vajrayani Siddhas might have had dislike for Vedic so called knowledge

but they fererntly follwed the tenets of Original Buddhism, even in those so called degraded conditions. Dharmakirti, a Buddhist scholar of seventh century, in a famous verse in "Praman Vartik", enumerates five differences in the tenets of Buddhist and Brahmanic creed. These were, as elaborated earlier:

1. belief in chatuvarna with supremacy of brahmins and graded ineqality,

2. belief in scritpures strengtheing this inequality,

3. belief in God and atma and all that goes with it together with the sanctions by this God to these books propagating inequality.

4. belief in acumulatimg of 'punya' i.e. virtue by visiting the places of worship situated mostly near the banks of river and belief in bath in these rivers like Ganga can wipe out all accumulated sins and theeby ensuring a fixed and perineal sourse of easy and effortless income for priestly castes, and lastly,

5. belief in extreme austerities of torturing the bodies by some 'yogis' to obtain salvation.

In following these aspects, none of the Siddhas were in any way inferior to their earlier counterparts of Mahayanis, and their zeal of fighting with Brahmanic supremacy and all that goes with it, was in no way of lesser intensity than their predecessors. Therefore, to ascribe the poor caliber of Buddhist religious leaders, who were now called Siddhas, to fall of Buddhism is not correct.

So the real reason or the decline was the hostilty of the brahmins and the final blow was by the conquest by the Muslims, leading to fall of Buddhism. Therefore, Dr. Ambedkar made a distinction between the causes of decline and cause of fall.

Buddhist Siddhas were the forerunners of Bhakti cult

L. M. Joshi avers that the present Bhakti movement, of which the present day Brahmanic scholars are so proud of, and they feel this is the legacy of Aryan/Brahmanic/Vedic tradition and not of Buddhistic origin, and go on congratulating each other for its survival during the Muslim onslaught, was in fact, the gift of the Siddhas, labled by Brahmins as 'corrupt'. While referring to the activities of the saint poets of Karnataka and Maharashtra like Basaveswara and Namdeva, and of North India like Raidas, Kabir and Nanak

etc. and of Sufi Muslim saints, he says:

"The Buddhist message of social equality and communal harmony had left a deep impression on the mind of Indian people which continued after the transformation of the classical Buddhist movement. ... The task of fighting the evils of casteism and untouchability was continued by the Buddhist Siddhas, the adepts of Tantrika culture, during the early medieval centuries. A large number of these Siddhas came from lower caste families, but their greatness was assured by their success (siddhi) in esoteric culture (sadhana). This mission of social reform was then resumed by the saint poets of the bhakti movement throughout the Middle Ages. Though these saint poets (sants) were, generally speaking within the fold of the Brahmanical "Hindu" religious tradition, yet they revolted freely against many fundamental dogmas and authentic customs of traditional Brahmanism. **Their social and moral teachings were more in keeping with Buddhism than with Brahmanism.** All of them disregarded the rules of the varna-ashram-dharma scheme and attacked social distinctions based on birth and profession. Many of them were born in shudra families. They became exalted through their pure character, sincere devotion and magnanimity, ..." [L.M.Joshi:1973:53]

Views of Rahul Sankrutyan

However, Rahul Sankrutayan blames Vajrayanis for decline of Buddhism, saying that decline of Buddhism started with the rise of Vajrayana and was completed after Turkish invasion. [Rahul:1973:71] He opines that the use of women and wine by the Vajrayani bhikshus also could have been a contributory factor in fall of Buddhism. [Ibid., p.79]

He says, it is a wrong propaganda that Shankaracharya, in eighth century, drove away Buddhism from India. On the contrary, Buddhism was flourishing during this time. This was the time of glory of Nalanda University and of foundation of Vikramshila University. This was the time when the most powerful Buddhist Dynasty of Palas was established. This was the time that the great Buddhist philosophers like Shantirakshita and Dharmottara emerged from the University of Nalanda. [Rahul:1973:77]

Even four centuries after Shankaracharya, till the end of twelfth century Buddhism was not vanished from North India. The Gaharwad dynasty not only supported Brahmanism, they also supported Buddhism. Gahadwar queen Kumar Devi built the "Dharma chakra maha vihara" at Sarnath. Govindachandra gave gifts of several villages to the Jetvan Mahavihara.

[Rahul:1973:77]

Jaganmitrananda (Mitrayogi), the preceptor (dikshaguru) of last Gahardwad king Jaychanda, was a Buddhist saint. His letter to his disciple king Jaychanda is still available in Tibetan language as "Chandraraja- Lekh" in Tibet. [Rahul:1973:77] This king is being defamed in Brahmanic literature as a traitor to have invited Md. Ghori. The Buddhist scholar Bhikshu Dharmarakshit feels that the real reason for his being termed as such was because of his Buddhist leanings. ["*sarnath-varanasi*", p.63 ff.]

Pala kings in East remained Buddhist till end of their dynasty. [Rahul:1973:77] In south, the Shilahar Dynasty of Konkan, was purely Buddhist. [Rahul:1973:78] Even in Kerala, the mother land of Shankaracharya, Buddhist influence persisted. They did not restrict the Buddhist learning, but on the contrary, it were they who preserved the *"Manjushri mula kalpa"* and handed over to us. [Ibid.,p.78]

That the Tamil word "Cherai" means "Naaga" in Sanskrit [Nair:1959:8] is to be remembered, and that Naagas were the followers of Buddhism is well known.

The bhikshus could be easily spotted because of their Yellow robes, which had became a kind of death warrant for them. It was due to massacre of bhikhus, the leaders of Buddhist laity, and the destruction of their Viharas, by the Muslims, the fall of Buddhism occurred. The Chief of Indian Buddha Sangha, a Kashmiri pundit, Shakyasribhadra, had to migrate to Bengal after the devastation and sack of Vikramshila University. Later when Muslims reached Bengal, he left for Tibet with his disciples. He was respectfully invited by King Kirtidwaja. There, he stayed for many years and ultimately came to his mother land, Kashmir, and died there in 1226 A.D. Similarly many Bhikshus had to run away from India. [Rahul:1973:79]

Brahmin books must not be relied upon

Prof. Rhys Davids has aptly warned the scholars, either in Europe or in India, of the falacy of believing in Brahmanic books to understand the affairs in India. He is referring to the social condition of India in the sixth and seventh centuries B.C., but it applies also, rather more so, to later times. He observes:

"...They have relied for their information about the Indian peoples too exclusively on the brahmin books. And these, partly because of the natural antipathy felt by the priests towards the free republics, partly because of the

later date of the most of the extant priestly literature, and especially of the law books, ignore the real facts. They convey the impression that the only recognized, and in fact universally prevalent, form of government was that of kings under the guidance and tutelage of priests. But the Buddhist records, amply confirmed in these respects by the somewhat later Jain once, leave no doubt upon the point. [Rhys Davids:1993:2]

Phuley, Shahu, Ambedkar Versus Tilak, Gandhi, Golwalkar

It is well known fact that there existed in ancient India a conflict between two ideologies one that supported *chatrvarnya* system and the other who opposed it. In various times this strugle assumed different forms and different names with different personalities. History of India is nothing but the history of this strugle. In modern times this strugle is going on with no less zeal and fervour. The leaders of one group are Phuley Shahu and Ambedkar and their opponents are Tilak Gandhi and Golwalkar.

Brahmanic tendency to find faults with Buddhism

That the mentality of Indian elite has always been to find faults with the Budha, His techings, the Buddhist people, and everything they stand for. This is not on any solid ground but just to show them down, just out of spitefulness. Because the Buddhist school of thought always went against vested interests of Brahmins, they were always hostile to the Buddhists. In modern times, they take delight in believing that the cause of all ills in modern India is the Buddhist period of about fifteen centuries, when whole of India was under Buddhist influence. They blame Buddhists for their defeat at war with all the foreigners all throughout the span of history, they blame Buddhists for state of affairs of women, now I came accros a prominent doctor of Nagpur blaming Budhist ahimsa for decline of Surgical skill and knowledge in India, a subject discussed by us elsewhere.

Two Orphans in the world of Nations

Swamiji compares condition of Indians with Jews. Only that presently, the Jews have progressed, but we did not. This is what Swamiji said some sixty years ago:

"The Jews of Palestine gave birth to a Jesus Christ; but they crucified him and rejected his religion; and their country passed into the hands of the Muslims where Britain now holds the balance between the Jews and the Muslims. India

produced a Buddha, but when she rejected his religion of righteousness, she passed into the hands of the Muslims and Britain now holds the balance between the Hindus and the Muslims. The Jews became the kingless people of the world and the Hindus the only civilized nation that is not master of its own country. The two great religions, Buddhism and Christianity, rejected in the land of their birth, spread far and wide, and now sustain the religious life of the greatest nations of the East and the West, whereas the Hindus and the Jews rank as the orphans of humanity." [Swami Dharmatirtha, p. 110]

Vedantists

As Dharmatirtha observes, Hindus always preach about the unique greatness of Hindu philosophy and religion and culture, proclaiming that Vedanta alone can save the world and humanity. However, we know as a grim truth of past history and present reality that it has not saved India, it has not saved Hindus. It has not during any known period of history prevented the Hindus from committing the sins, horrors, and oppressions, or to have social existence any higher standard of happiness and freedom than other nations. Even in modern times, the Hindus have not cultivated any superior virtues and ideals, and have ignominiously failed to prove themselves true to own professed culture or to the aspiration of modern civilization. No other peoples deny justice and humanity to their own kith and kin, their own coreligionist and compatriots, without rhyme or reason as the Hindu do even today. [Swami Dharmatirtha, p. 302]

Failure of Socialist Reformers

How Swamiji's prophesy has come true, can be seen by his words that, India has seen more saints and reformers and teachers than any other country, but they could not save her. The masses were led to the path of national suicide by their native exploiters and priests. The Socialists and leaders of to day do not educate the people to adjust their lives to the new ideas, or remove the worst anomalies of the country's life. So long as the Hindu classes, rather than the masses, are steeped in the culture of caste and the religion of deception and exploitation, their words achieve nothing. They themselves think and assure us that Socialism has nothing to do with Hindu customs and beliefs, which will remain intact even after Swaraj, or invent new ways to justify and preserve these diabolical distinctions and insults in the name on the sanctity of religion. [Dharmatirtha, p.304]

Nationalists

There is another group of people, the Nationalists, for whom "our unique culture" is important, and this is leading to increased regionalism, though they keep on hankering "Unity in Diversity", i.e. the unique culture of Bengal, the Punjab, the Maharashtra, the Andhras, the Tamils, the Kerala and so forth. For them, Dharmatirtha remaks:

"...God alone knows wherein lies the uniqueness and glory except it be in the castes and their disastrous ramifications. In the ultimate analysis, this separate culture will be found to consist of exclusiveness in marriage, in eating and drinking, in the superstitions and customs, which divide one people from another and help them to organize distinct groups for mutual exploitation at the sacrifice of national unity and freedom. ... a good number of our Socialists and Nationalists will turn out to be rank Capitalists and fanatical Communalists. They cannot be otherwise, born and brought up as they are in the atmosphere of Hindu Imperialism, inured to the slavery of caste and the untruths of priestcraft." [Dharmatirtha, p. 305]

How true his prophecy has come out, is there for everyone to see.

The work of Guru Govind Singh

Of many revolutions against Brahmanism, only Sikhism seems to have survived, at least to some extent. Guru Govind, tenth from Guru Nanak took the reigns of Sikhism, in 1675, and organised his religion on egalitarian basis, commensurate with the saints of northern India, who are now acknowledged as being influenced with the spirit of Buddhism, which has visibly disappeared. It was Kabir, who led the torch, more than others, in boldly assailing idolatry, denying the divine authority of the Quran and Vedas, and protesting against neglect of local languages and use of Sanskrit. Guru Nanak took the lead to found a new order, a new nation free from superstitions of Hindus. His teachings were liked by Hindus as well as Muslims. It was the last Guru Govind who gave Sikhs a religious, social and political constitution. Brahmins tried to impose upon him the authority of goddess Kali, but it failed and his followers were saved from priestcraft and idolatry. He preached against caste, elevated women to equal status, stopped idolatry, among other precepts. His faith was disliked by Brahmins but liked by masses, and

"In a short time, 80,000 men became his followers and the number went on increasing. A large number of Brahmans and other twice-born Hindus deserted

the Sikh-fold when he insisted on the observance of these disciplines. Guru Govind welcomed the departure of the incorrigibles who clung to their old customs and castes, and in their place, admitted thousand of the humble peasants and hill tribes who were thus enabled to realise their manhood, and become the respectable citizens of the Khalsa State. "Govind Singh thus appealed to the eternal instincts of equality, liberty and brotherhood, broke for ever the caste prejudices and received into the Khalsa people of all classes who had hitherto been debarred from bearing arms and participating in religion. The Singhs on the Khalsa felt themselves at once elevated and equal to the proud and martial Rajputs. Personal pride and strength were infused into them, and Sikhism knitted them together into one common brotherhood, animated by a common faith, one social life and national longing. The effect of the new teachings, it is said, was immediate and profound. The Sikhs began to manifest great chivalry and courage and live in sweet social love and harmony among themselves. Wherever there was oppression or cruelty, the Sikhs were there, and with ready heart and brave arms, helped the persecuted. Among themselves, they lived like brothers, they used to feed one another, shampoo one another when tired, bathe one another, wash one another's clothes, and one Sikh always met another with a smile on his face and love in his heart." (G. A. Natesan & Co., *Guru Govind*, p.22), [Swami Dharmatirtha, p. 161]

For those who imagined that Sikhs were meant for protection of Brahmins, the above account would make aware of the real position and in this light, if we perceive the recent descison of Authorities of Sikh "Panth", that Sikhs are not Hindus, we can highly appreciate their thinking. If the idea that Sikhs are Hindus, is to disappear from the minds of everybody once for all, we feel that the Sikh authorities must stop the use of the phrase "Sikh Panth" and instead use "Sikh Dharma" for their way of life. This word "*Panth*" has caused a lot of confusion among the masses.

Hindus became Hindus by Conversion

The word Hindu has no relevance for Indians before the Muslim conquest. It is they who gave Indians this name, rather in a derogatary sense. To those who find fault with Christian missionaries for encouraging mass conversion, Swamiji reminds:

"... Hindus became Hindus by a sort of mass conversion or mass classification by the Muhammadans, and the various castes acquired their status by a similar process of mass classification behind their backs by the Brahman first and lastly by the British Government. Sectarian legislative enactments and

judicial decisions based on so-called immemorial customs, fixing the rights of succession, inheritance, family management, marriage, etc., of different groups gave the finishing touches to the caste structure." [Swami Dharmatirtha, p. 174]

How Brahminism was helped by the British

Swamiji enumerated ten ways, in which Britishers helped establish the Brahmin Raj.

Firstly, they raised the Brahmans to the highest posts of power, profit and confidence.

Secondly, they chivalrously championed the cause of the decaying temples, idolatrous festivals, and charming dancing girls with the hearty patronage and protection of the company's government, to the mutual advantage and recreation of the company and the priests.

Thirdly, they established the caste Kutcheries, the most dreaded tribunal of the Hindus,

Fourthly, they unearthed from their oblivion Manu Shastra and other spurious texts, which the vast majority of the Hindus had never heard of, and elevated them to the status of authoritative works of Hindu law.

Fifthly, they handed over the temples to the controls of trustees, and thus facilitated the aggrandisement of Brahmanisn and deprivation of the rights of the lower orders.

Sixthly, through judicial decision and administrative classification and even by legal enactments, the so-called Hindu law has been applied to all Indians who are not Christians or Muhammadans.

Seventhly, they gave caste distinctions royal recognition, state protection, enhanced dignity, positive value and significance, and even political importance.

Eightly they blasted the hopes of reformers and teachers by making it impossible for them to alter the status quo by any practicable means.

Ninthly, in the name of non-interference, they have actively strengthened and

perpetuated the evils of society which it was their duty to fight.

Lastly Christian antiquarians have added insult to injury by flattering the non-British castes and unchristians idolatry as meritorious cultural achievements to be preserved for the delectation of humanity.

Swamiji concludes by saying:

"There is only one more thing which Britain has to do to discharge her trust to the dumb millions of her subjects and to fill the cup of unhappy India's suicidal bliss, and that is to hand over the seal and emblem of Indian Empire to the temple priests and give a farewell kiss or kick to the blissful fool Independent India." [Dharmatirtha, p.177]

It seems, the Brahmins have since achieved their goal, under the guise of "Swaraj", and succeeded in establishing Brahmin dominance under the name of "Hindutva".

What is meant by a Hindu

Swamiji explains that the world "Hindu" must not be confused to have an unity of creed or faith. "Unfortunately, or as some believe fortunately", it is not so, and Hinduism(Brahminism) is not a religion in the sense in which Buddhism Muhammadanism and Christianity are. The aggregate of the traditions, beliefs and customs and institutions of multitude of tribes and castes of India, is called Hinduism(Brahminism), though they may be mutually irreconcilable themselves. The questions, who is a Hindu and what is Hinduism(Brahminism) have been considered again and again by eminent scholars, and so far no satisfactory answer has been given. Therefore, all those who are not Muhammadans or Christians are treated as Hindus. All types of worship is allowed, as long as Brahin supremacy is maintained, such as Theism, Atheism, Polytheism, Adwaitism, Dwaitism, Saivism, Vaishnavism and so forth. It contains nature worship, ancestor worship, animal worship, idol worship, demon worship, symbol worship, self worship, and the highest god worship, with confounding and conflicting philosophies. It allows all barbarous practices and dark superstitions and mystic rites and sublime philosophies, and covers all population with half barbarian wild tribes, and depressed classes and untouchables, along with cultured gentle natures and highly evolved souls. Hindus are amorphous mass of people, as a prominent scholar of Hinduism(Brahminism) observed:

"Though the Hindus are thus separated from other religious communities, it should not be imagined that they are united by a bond of a common system of doctrines. There is in fact no system of doctrines, no teacher, or school of teaching, no single god that is accepted by all the Hindus. Again no amount of deviation from the established doctrines, or disregard of any book or even of some custom, would cause a person to fall from Hinduism(Brahminism), that is become liable to exclusion from the Hindu community." [S.V.Kelkar, *Essay on Hinduism(Brahminism)*, p.34, quoted by Swami Dharmatirtha, p.194 ff.]

Even those Christians and Mohamedans, they have plans to incorporate in Hinduism(Brahminism) and terms like "Mohemadi Hindus" are already coined for them, and full preparations are going on for its implementation.

Also plans are afoot to create new 'Swastika' temples for such "purified" Christians.

Vagueness of Hindus is a virtue for them

This vagueness and the absence of all restraints of form and scope, is a boon for some leaders to declare a deceptive slogan of "Unity in diversity", in this "unique vacuity and brilliant disorganisation". Swamiji comments:

"...The honest truth, however, seems to be that the various attempts made by successive teachers and kings in the past to restore order and some sort of uniformity have not succeeded to any considerable extent..."

The obvious reason of this failure, is the desire of Brahmin elites to govern the OBCs. Hinduism(Brahminism) is a wild forest with good and bad things thriving together, and needs to be converted into an orderly well planned garden to suit human needs and practical issues, with a good deal of clearing and planning and pruning. Swamiji concludes:

"...If the Hindus want to function as an organised nation along with the other nations of the world, as an independent nation in the midst of other independent nations, they will not be able to do it in their present disorganisation and chaos." [Swami Dharmatirtha, p. 196]

Arrogance of Brahmins, who rule Hindus

Swamiji belives that the arrogance of Brahmins did not change since the times of Abbe Dobois, who wrote:

"There is a well known Hindu proverb which says, a temple mouse fears not the gods! This exactly applies to the Brahmans who enter their temples without showing the slightest sign of serious thought or respect for the divinities who are enshrined therein. Indeed they often choose these particular places to quarrel and fight in. Even while performing their numerous religious fooleries, their behaviour shows no indication of fervour or real devotion." [Abbe Dubois, p.299, Swami Dharmatirtha, p. 217]

Swamiji feels that these remarks are letter by letter true of the temples of the present day also, perhaps with the additional force that the irreverence is manifest among the worshippers also. It may however be added that the "secular" Brahmins are no different than these "sacred" ones.

Attitude towards women

The learned Frenchman also wrote: "To have any connection with a courtesan or with an unmarried person is not considered a form of wickedness in the eyes of the Brahmans. These men, who look upon the violation of any trivial custom as a heinous sin, see no harm in the most outrageous and licentious excesses. It was practically for their use that the dancers and prostitutes who are attached to the service of the temples were originally entertained, and they may often be heard to intone the following scandalous line: **Vesya darsanmnam punyam, papa nasanam!** which means, "Looking upon a prostitute is a virtue which takes away sin." (p.213)

Swamiji observes that though the "Dancing girls have been dismissed from some of the temples in recent years, otherwise the priestly mentality is not much different to-day from what it was when the above lines were written." [Swami Dharmatirtha, p. 217]

Suggestions for nation building

Discussing the constructive thoughts and efforts and guiding as to what must be done, Swamiji considers Nationality as the capacity of a people to function and develop as an organic unit. It is a dynamic impulse to realise a common individuality than of a static unity already attained. It is not a feature but a feeling. It is not merely a heritage of the past but a power of the present. Its importance is not in what has been achieved but in its hopes of future achievements. Swamiji compares those who seek consolation in the records of bygone ages to an insolvent pauper delighting himself in browsing old account books. It lies not in glorifying moutains, lands, rivers and the like but in "Man"

and his attitude towards "fellow men", as Swamiji observes:

"... The true national spirit is to be seen in a persistent desire to effect closer union and association among the individuals and groups constituting society, in a growing sense of community of interests, social, religious, economic, political and other, in an instinctive opposition to forces within and without the nation which tend to endanger its solidarity, and in the ability to evolve new ideals and institutions to embody the spirit of the collective life. ..." [Swami Dharmatirtha, p. 258]

Instead of an obstinate clinging to mere existence and past glories, Nationalism implies capacity to grow and to expand, to assimilate the helpful, and oppose the harmful influences. It is not a passive sentiment of love for a great past, but an active yearning for a greater future, through a collective will. Political nationality is an idea of recent growth, and is result of a new consciousness of territorial and political unity due to the impact of European thought, literature, political ideals and institutions, and for the first time in her history of all India, to a central rule under the British. [Swami Dharmatirtha, p. 258]

Tests of Hindu Nationalism

India has been suffering under the two imperialisms, "Brahmanical and British placed one above the other", and true nationalism should be tested by the criteria, which are:

"... the three tests of Hindu Nationalism:- (1) Opposition to caste, (2) opposition to priestcraft and idolatry, and (3) Inter-religious tolerance and fraternisation." [Swami Dharmatirtha, p. 262]

More nationalism persisted in the past

Nationalist spirit is said to have started since British arrived. But in reality, there was more fellow feeling in teachings of saints, inspired by Buddhism, and as Swamiji exclaims that during the days of Akbar, Kabir, Nanak, Chaitanya, Tukaram, Eknath and Shivaji, there seemed to be greater fellow feeling and brotherhood between Hindus and Mohemedans than after the arrival of the British and manifestation of national spirit. [Swami Dharmatirtha, p. 288]

Modus operandi of Brahmins to enslave Hindus

That the *kalivarjya* was the method of brahmins to tackle the Buddhist influence over the masses and impose their supremacy. They changed their laws without actually condemning them. All laws and rules, were amended including Civil, Criminal, Revenue and Personal laws. It is not properly realized by the masses, that King was not the Law maker; he had no legislative power, contrary to the popular belief. He was only the executive head and had a responsibility to implement the laws made by the brahmins. At the most he could only legislate on revenue matter, that too, as per the rules already laid down. He had some judicial powers, but that too, he could not pass judgement against the law given by the brahmins.

Who suffered in Kalivarjya

In Kalivarjya, main law was against sea voyage. That is how the sea worthy races of Pallava and Chola countries suffered. All the trade that was being conducted through the sea stopped. Who suffered? Not the brahmins, surely. It will be clear, if we take a look at the products of export. Most of the the products of export were based on the agriculture, horticulture, animal husbandary and forest economy. Even the textile industry which had reached a high acclaim in foreign lands, was based cotton, silk and wool. All these occupations were in the hands of working classes, who were all doomed to be shudras. All these industries suffered. All these castes in the village econoomy suffered. All these groups, which were prosperous during the Buddhist rule, were degraded into castes, due to rigid caste rules imposed.

The mobility of the professions was stopped. *Telis*, who extracted oil from oil seeds, *Malis*, who grew the vegitables, the *Dhangars*, who reared the goats and lamb, *Sutars*, who made and repaied the farmers impliments, *Kumhars*, those who suppled earthen pots to villagers and *Mahars* and *Mangs* who protected the villages from strangers. All these proffessions became heriditary and social intercourse among them stopped.

Aim is to awaken the masses These are the masses of which Indian society is made of, and it is the need of the day to educate them. The process of emancipation of masses was started by Mahatma Phule, strengthened by Shahu, and put in Indian Constitution by Dr. Ambedkar. Now it is the duty of masses to protect the Constitution, if they want to protect themselves from oncoming Brahmanic tyranny. This is an humble effort to aid the education of masses, as Dr. Amdekar has warned that only when a slave is made to realize his slavery, he can revolt against it. In one of his neglected messages to the "Maratha Mandir", 53 years ago, he had observed that, the middle class is not

as liberal as upper one, and has no ideology as lower one, which makes it enemy of both the classes. The middle class Marathas of Maharashtra also have this fault. They have only two ways out, either to join hands with upper classes and prevent the lower classes from progress, and the other is to join hands with lower classes and both together destroy the upper class power comming against the prrgress of both. There was a time, they used to be with lower classes, now they seem to be with upper ones. It is for them to decide which way to go. The future of not only Indian masses but also their own future depends upon what decision the Maratha leaders take. What he said about Marathas, equally applies to all OBCs, and still holds true after half a century. Dr. Ambedkar wrote much to educate the OBCs. May be, it is now bearing fruits after fifty years. Those days Swami Dharmatirtha had also observed: "Object in this volume is to trace the causes and course of India's enslavement, and awaken the conscience of all parties. There is no desire to wound anybody's feelings. There is no rancour in our heart. We believe that the socio- religious order which has brought the whole Hindu race to their knees is more satanic than the worst foreign imperialism and must be crushed before India can be free. We have renounced everything in order to be able to serve the lowliest of the Hindus. Our life is dedicated to the cause of Hindu emancipation. We searched for the causes of thraldom. The results of our investigation and thinking are expressed in this volume without any effort to conceal unpleasant facts. The spirit of lamentation is also entirely absent. The Hindu masses are getting infected with a grim determination to re-establish the free-born rights on the rock of true liberty rather than on self-deception, feigned unity and disguised exploitation. [Swami Dharmatirtha, p. 12]

Chapter 2

TECHNIQUES IN CAUSING FALL OF BUDDHISM

As Dr. Ambedkar has explained, the causes of fall and decline are different. Muslim invasion was the cause of fall of Buddhism, not only in India, but also all over the world. Before Islam, countries like Bactria, Parthia, Afghanistan, Gandhar and Chinese Turkasthan, as well as whole of Asia were Buddhists. It had also spread to Europe and the Celts in Britain were Buddhists, according to Donald A. Mackenzie. [W&S, vol.3, p.230]

As The reasons why Buddhism was destroyed but Brahmanism survived the massacre by Muslims must be understood. There are three reasons enumerated by Ambedkar, (1) support of State to Brahmanism, (2) Buddhist Bhikkus, once perished had be created from scratch by rigorous training, while Brahmin priests are ready made by birth and (3) that Buddhist lay worshipers were driven to Islam by Brahmanic persecution. [W&S, vol.3, p.230]

Prof. Surendra Nath Sen very rightly observed, during the Indian History Congress held at Allahabad in 1938, that there were no satisfactory answers as yet to two problems concerning medieval history of India, one connected with origins of Rajputs and the other to the distribution of Muslim population in India. [W&S, vol.3, p.236]

The common belief that Islam followed the route of conquest forcing its faith over the subjugated people, Prof. Sen said, cannot explain Muslim conversion in eastern Bengal having no racial affinity with the conquerors, though it might explain conversions in western regions like Afganisthan and Punjab, which had some racial affinity since Kushana times. So the reasons are to be found elsewhere. That the reasons were persecution by Brahmins of the converted masses, who were predominantly Buddhists. Ambedkar thinks, Sen's following passage is very significant:

"It cannot be an accident that the Punjab, Kashmir, the district around Behar Sharif, North-East Bengal where Muslims now predominate, were all strong Buddhist centres in pre-Muslim days. It will not be fair to suggest that the Buddhists succumbed more easily to political temptations than the Hindus and change of religion was due to the prospects of the improvement of their political status." [W&S, vol.3, p.236]

That brings us to the real cause of the fall of Buddhism in India was persecution of the Buddhists, which went on for centuries causing gradual decline, and ultimately lead to its fall. Ambedkar gives examples of many

kings persecuting Buddhists and concludes that the fall of Buddhism was due to the Buddhists becoming Muslims for escaping the tyranny of Brahmanism. "If it has been a disaster, it is a disaster for which Brahmanism must thank itself." [W&S, vol.3, p.238]

Before coming to the effects of fall of Buddhism, which is our main subject, we have briefly discussed the various causes that led to this tragedy which befell on this country. As exclaimed by L. M. Joshi, this tragedy is mostly ignored or distorted by the elite of this land for selfish motives. [L.M.Joshi:1977:xvii] Here we like to discuss the techniques used by Brahmanism.

Violent Methods of Brahmanic Conquest

One of the methods of spread of Brahmanism was by slow cultural Invasion. Question some times is asked why they did not resort to armed struggle. As a matter of fact, when the situation permitted, they even did that. The cultural invasion was the best means adopted by them, though armed aggressions were attempted throughout, right from the times of the Buddha. Even before Pushyamitra Shunga, Chanakya seems to have brought in Chandragupta Maurya on throne to annihilate Nanda kings. Unfortunately for Brahmins the coup backfired as Chandragupta became a Jaina and Ashoka became a Buddhist monk first and later upasaka. His images as a Bhikshu, were seen by Chinese traveler I-Tsing, and his rock edicts mention about his becoming a Buddhist. Major armed offensive was launched in times of Pushyamitra under guidance of Patanjali. Still the masses accepted Kushanas rather than submit to Brahmana rule. Brahmanas had to bring in the Guptas, and under Samudragupta Brahmin supremacy prevailed. It was after Harshavardhana in seventh century A.D., that Brahmins got the real chance of perpetrating their supremacy. One of the means was by creating the Rajputs. Those were the means of armed struggle arranged by Brahmins.

Conquest by peaceful means

During this period they spread to Kerala. The evidence for study of their invasion on Buddhist social culture is more easily available in south India and specially Kerala, where Brahmin penetration was much later and more difficult than in North India. Here their method was more of Cultural Invasion. It is therefore, necessary to concentrate on South India and presume the same techniques must have been employed in the entire country, which requisite regional adjustments. Mr. Nair explains as follows:

"Theoretically then we might ask why the Brahmins could not achieve a military conquest and achieve ethno- expansionism ... The answer is the

Brahmins in the initial stages of their cultural conquest had only an intense apostolic motivation **unaccompanied by the resources to organize themselves into armed bands. Indeed it is much later history when they were finally successful in entrenching themselves as a religious oligarchy within the kingdom of a "Kshatriya" prince and goading him to undertake religious wars and expansion through "Aswamedhayagas".** [emphasis ours] Similarly the Nambudiri Brahmin in ancient Malabar could have only attempted a peaceful cultural conquest through astute ways and not through force as he was himself bereft of the means to compel the Nayars to follow his ways except that of persuasion through example and precept. [Nair:1959:10]

Story of Parshurama

But the stories in Puranas speak of armed struggle. For example story of Parashurama can be quoted. In recent times, a particular group of people have started celebrating Birth Anniversary of Parsurama, who is supposed to have avenged his father's murder by overpowering the Kshatriyas by their own military weapon. Nair mentions:

"...Dr. G. S. Ghurye reads into the story the desire of the Brahmins to show that the Brahmin's wrong would not go unavenged. Second, to impress the fact that the Brahmins if they took to arms, would prove themselves immensely superior to the Kshatriyas in warfare and last to humiliate the Kshatriyas." [See "Caste and Class in India", Bombay, 1957, p.70.] Dr. D. D. Kosambi's interpretation is equally interesting: "The excessive and self contradictory annihilation (of Kshatriyas) is clearly psychological overcompensation for Brahmin helplessness in the face of Kshatriya dominance. Parsurama is promoted in the Bhrugu inflated Mahabharat to the status of a Vishnu incarnation. The tension between priest and chief is an undercurrent in Vedic literature thereafter, though both combined against the other two castes." [Dr.D.D. Kosambi in "An introduction to the Study of Indian History", (Bombay, 1956), p.113. [Nair:1959:11]

Domestic and sexual invasion in Kerala

The invasion of Brahmins, in Kerala, was domestic. Unlike the Christian proselytisation, the cultural conquest of the Brahmin was peculiarly intimate process in Kerala, Nair observes and avers that, **"it was in fact such, wherever it took place in India."** This was essential for the status-value without which success was impossible. Nambudiri Brahmins not only married Nayar women but also kept only Nayar servants at home and Nayar women in company of their women, in order to enforce social control over the leading Nayar communities. [Nair:1959:16]

Why Brahmins could not manage to keep dominance in current times, Nair says was due to, modern education, inability to hold enormous estates under feudal lords and biological degradation, which was because of:

"...The closed upper-class family system with its undue emphasis on primogeniture and contemptuous negligence of the sexual rights of female members by condemning them to life long maidenhood if the Nambudiri husbands were not forthcoming to marry them, accelerated their degeneration. ..." [Nair, p.18]

Nair agreeing with Lewis A.W., opines, that a healthy upper class biologically is one which allows its weaker members to fall into lower classes and which in each generation recruits the more successful members of the lower classes into its own ranks. He contrasts Kerala Brahmins with those in Tamilnad, who under the leadership of Ramanujacharya, accepted vertical mobility as an article of faith for purposes of sheer survival, which permitted it to survive economic changes and adapt itself, in some measure at least, to altered modes of earning livelihood, different at any rate form their traditional mode of life as the priesthood, but the Nambudiri did not and hence his days were numbered even during the first decade of the present century due to economic changes. [Nair, p.18]

Brahmin non-Brahmin relationship

Nair believes, Nayar community adapted Brahminical ideas through stages during several centuries, and still now the psychological resistance to Brahminical ideas and intrusion has not ended. Nambudiris could continue to impregnate Nayar women wantonly only for a few generations and only within a few Nayar Tharawads. Later diffusion during successive generations must have taken place through inter-marriage between families under Brahminical influence and those without it, gradually diluting Brahminical social tradition among Nayars and render it insignificant during the beginning of this century. The local spread of Hinduism(Brahminism) was reinforced by institutions and Brahmanic ways of regional and all India Brahmanism at a later date. The social control of Brahmins through the spread of local Hinduism(Brahminism) was similar in other parts of India especially South India. The Vellalas, the Reddis, the Naidus and several other communities posed similar problems like Nayars did to the Brahmin cultural conqueror. [Nair, p.26]

However, the Vellala or Reddi never allowed the Brahmin to enter into the family fold under the guise of a divinely inspired progenitor, so the Brahmin did not succeed in breaking up their social system. As family is the psychological agent of society and once it was kept outside the pale of Brahmin influence, the group did not succumb to Brahmanical social tradition.

Neither the Vellalas nor the Reddis had thus passively adapted new cultural pattern which the Brahmins had attempted foisting on them. However, what they succeeded in averting within the family they could not avoid facing outside it. [Nair, p.27]

Why Hinduism(Brahminism) could not spread among Adivasis

Nair believes Hinduism(Brahminism) could not spread among the aborigines because their tribal organization was far too strong to accept such intrusions, and it is one of the reasons why a racial theory of Untouchability cannot be advanced. He mentions Ambedkar's theory that although the tribes have become castes, the tribal organization remains intact, divided into clans having some object animate or inanimate as a totem, with restriction of marriage within gotra. Ambedkar, in "The Untouchables", stresses the importance of an examination of the distribution of the totems among different castes and communities as a good test for determining race, as anthropometry has been. [Nair, p.28]

Why Shankara fought Buddhism

The aim of Brahmins under Shankara, was to regain their hegemony, and the relentless and unceasing efforts of the Brahmins to put down Buddhism were solely calculated to regain their lost monopoly as religious oligarchy. Until the rise and spread of Buddhism, Brahmins faced no competition in their religious business. There was no powerful religio-social movement in Indian history before the advent of Mahabira and Gautama. Brahmins were smarting about their defeat among the masses because of Buddhism. The revival of Brahmanism under the spiritual leadership of Shankara was thus an effort for survival of Brahmins, and was entirely dependent on the defeat of Buddhism and Jainism in the religious field. [Nair, p.34]

However, the revival of Brahmanism in India after the advent of Shankara was complete during the subsequent centuries. There are sufficient historical evidences to show that the Brahmins used coercion throughout against the Buddhists and the Jains and that they have used every means at their disposal to spread their influence throughout India. The Advaita philosophy of Shankara was unsuitable for the crowd and being still beyond the comprehension of ordinary Hindus, how did it serve as the instrument for the revival of popular Hinduism(Brahminism)? Shankara was tolerant towards them, propagated through songs, fought with Mimansakas and **broke down barriers between Buddhist deities and Brahmanism, making it indistinguishable from secular Buddhism.** As Pannikar has pointed out, Buddhist temples like famous Jagannatha temple of Puri became Hindu temple, and with the laity accepting Hinduism(Brahminism), i.e. supremacy of

Brahmins, recruitment to Buddhist Sangha became more and more difficult. [*"Survey of Indian History"*, p.102, Nair, p. 231]

The revival of a personal religion in the form of Advaita philosophy was necessary to change the outlook of the masses who were attracted towards more secular religions such as Buddhism. [Nair, p.35] Brahmins evolved a complicated mythology for the common people to follow, they adopted many Buddhist and pagan festivals and details into their mythology, in order to neutralize all resistance from the Dravidians. **Shiva, a Dravidian deity was cleverly incorporated into the Brahmanical pantheon, and Muruga was adopted as Subramanya, and many Dravidian religious rites and festivals were incorporated in Brahmanism, and complex theologies, rituals and ceremonials consciously evolved to make their polytheism as comprehensive as possible.** [Nair, p.36]

Religion of Brahmins was different from that of masses

Nair observes that, **even though the Brahmins created the institutional religion for the masses they had not given up their personal religion,** for example the Manthras were not taught to the common people, not even to those members of tribes or groups who accepted their supremacy. The ceremonials and rituals were kept as their exclusive privilege, which was disgusting to non-Brahmins. [Nair, p.38]

Buddhist teachings had a powerful reaction against the corrupt practices of the Brahmins and led to the decline in their power and social control. Hence the Brahmin revolted and successfully overthrew Buddhism, and Brahmanism under such circumstances was bound to improve on the previous system and prepare itself for all the unpleasant eventualities of the future. There are two phases in the post-Shankara development of Brahmanism, viz, (a) the development of the highest form of personal religion and philosophy and (b) the development of institutional aspect of Hinduism(Brahminism) in an unprecedented fashion. Nair observes:

"...Let us, however, recall that both these developments were the outcome of the effective assimilation of Buddhistic ideas and practices so that the approval of the masses was easily obtained for the new form of religion, viz., popular Hinduism(Brahminism). On the personal plane the conceptual content of God not known or recognized by Buddhist was reemphasized and reinstated in Hindu thought in all its undying glory. This satisfied a great spiritual need of those times. ..." [Nair, p.38]

As Creedy had observed, from the social psychologic standpoint, there can be no doubt that the term "God" functions as one of our most powerful trigger phrases producing a feeling of reverence and profound submission, and conception of salvation and of another world is a powerful aid to feelings in resisting the crafts and assaults of the crowd. "The purpose of the poetic or metaphysical structure of religious doctrine is to falsify our wills to resist the temptation of the crowd." [Creedy, "Human Nature, writ large", Nair, p.38]

Techniques of Brahmanic controls

Nair finds it fascinating to study the strategic methods employed by the Brahmins to impose their social control over the Tamilians and rendering socially integrated communities such as the Vellalas amenable to the passive acceptance of Brahmanical Hinduism(Brahminism). These techniques had ultimately led all Indian Hinduism(Brahminism) to coalesce with regional and peninsular Hinduism(Brahminism) while local Hinduism(Brahminism) continued to flourish as a wheel within a wheel activating the entire mechanism of the social control of the Brahmins. [Nair, p.41]

It is the need of the day that the well to do, the educated, the elite among the *Bahujans* must try and understand the mechanisms, techniques and the means by which they have been pushed into the darkness of slavery and have been retained there for centuries. The group of people which understands its history, and can revive its identity, can fight for its existence, that group only can sustain the onslaught over its existence and remain viable.

Difference between Local and Regional Brahmanism

Locally only one caste of one individual language was to be subdued but in regional sphere multiple castes and multiple languages had to be tackled. Brahmins had to face the opposition and resistance. Salient features of their techniques of enslaving are summarized by Mr. Nair as follows:

1. Admission of kings to the Varna system
2. Extension of the Varna system
3. Extension of Sanskritic deities
4. Creation and development of ceremonial
5. The rise of plebeian mystagogues in support of Brahmanical social traditions
6. Sanskritisation of names of places
7. Social self of Brahmin

Admission of kings to Varna System

Prof. P. T. Srinivas Iyengar, "one of the rare examples of a Brahmin with the highest intellectual honesty", mentions that after the arrival of Brahmins to south India on invitation from local rulers to perform *yagas*, they could not be successful in establishing chaturvarna unlike they could in north India because their religious oligarchy could not mix well with the social democracy of locals. [Nair, p.44] Dr. S. S. Bharati mentions that Tholkappiyam oldest grammar of Tamil, has not a single reference to practice of any *yagams* by any non- Brahmin Tamils. [Nair, p.45] Brahmins admitted locals, whom they needed to fight against Buddhists, usually to Ksatriyahood but some times they were compelled to admit them as low grade Brahmins also. Nair says:

"Generally speaking, the technique of the Brahmins have been to admit the ruling chiefs to kshatriyahood but there are instances to show that under compulsion of circumstances, mainly to bring about vertical mobility in order to strengthen the ranks of their dwindling numbers, they have admitted certain ruling princes belonging to socially integrated communities to the "Bharadwaja gotra" and considered them as "inferior Brahmins. Dr. Srinivas, for instance, speaks of the Lingayat Rajahs of Coorg who have been in former days "responsible for the Sanskritisation of the customs, manners and rites of Coorgs". This must have been due to the fact that these Rajahs were raised to the status of the Brahmins and were fired by the zeal for the spread of ritualistic Brahmanism. Let us remember that the Lingayats of Mysore even today consider themselves to be Brahmins and retain their socially integrated modes of life with considerable exclusiveness of spirit which is at once the strength and weakness of the Hindu society of Mysore today. [Nair, p.45]

Extension of Varna system

It is well known that social rank of a person depends on his caste. But ancient Tamils before coming of Brahmins were free of all caste prejudices, as mentioned by A. L. Basham. Nair feels betrayal of the masses by the Brahmins began with the extension of the caste system to the multitudes of people who had never known anything like it. Ancient Tamilnad knew only classes and not castes:

"... The entire population lived in five natural division of the country, viz, (1) Kurinji or Hills and hill tracts, (2) Mullai, Forest glades and pastoral lands, (3) Marutham. Valleys and fields of arable lands, (4) Palai, Steppes or Stretches of deserts, (5) Neithal, Maritime tracts or coast lands on the sea board. The inhabitants of these lands were divided into seven classes as the caste system was unknown to them. [Nair, p.47]

How did the Brahmins succeed in converting a class based society into a caste based one? Maxweber explained, it was due to material wealth

acquired because of skills of *yadnyas* they rose in status and the life style preferred property and gainful pursuits. [Nair, p.47] The process was explained by Dr. Ambedkar as early as 1916, that Brahmins as a class enclosed themselves as an endogamous group meaning they stopped entering into matrimony with others. Thus "some closed the door; Others found it closed against them." [W&S, vol.1, p.18]

How Vellalas were subdued

There were Brahmins doing priestly jobs (Andanars) and others doing secular jobs (Parpars). As the status of both had to be elevated in caste hierarchy, caste system based on birth was clamped by them on the masses. They had no problem of accepting Arivars as secular Brahmins but the Vellalas resisted strongly. As Nair mentions, they were traditionally land owners, farmers and chieftains. They were the cultivated inhabitants of 'Marutham' and had a distinct social tradition of their own. They were prominent in Chera, Chola and Pandya kingdoms and had still then retained their powers and prestige till the time of Brahmanical agression. Nair observes:

"...In the Vellala therefore the Brahmin found the same obstacle as the Nayar of Kerala. Ingenuity demanded that the strength of this class had to be weakened through hypergamous unions just as the Nayar community was initially weakened by the Nambudiri's Connubium with the Nayar maiden. To what extent the Vellalas like the Nayars of Kerala intermarried with the Brahmins is a subject on which we have not much historical data. All the same the possibility cannot be ruled out that **there might have been in the early days of Brahmin infiltration numerous intermarriages between the two communities as a result of which this socially integrated community gradually took to Brahmanical ways of living and customs.** [Nair, p.48]

Careful selection of people to be elevated

They were very careful in not extending the acceptance to all. They were very choosy, as Nair says:

"Another interesting poser now is that if the Vellalas were then so powerful and that their position was so widely recognised over all the three important Tamil Kingdoms of Chera, Chola and Pandya why is it that the Brahmins did not confer on them Kshatriyahood especially as many ruling chiefs at that epoch may have been Vellalas themselves? The fact is that the Brahmins did not confer on the Vellalas Kshatriyahood exactly in the same way as they did not regard the Nayars as Kshatriyas even after having penetrated the Nayar household and produced many prototypes of their own kind. **For it is a**

fundamental principle of Brahmanical strategy that even in the extension of the Varna system they were careful not to extend the dimension of the upper castes under some unforeseen eventuality or circumstances. [emphasis ours] Let us go back to the study of local Hinduism(Brahminism) in Kerala. Had the Nambudiris raised the Nayars to Kshatriyahood, they would have outnumbered them very much and threatened them later. ..." [Nair, p.50]

The story of Parshurama has been utilized by the Brahmins for very many purposes, as we will see later. As a matter of fact it can form a basis for a detailed research study. But even here, it has the purpose, as Swamiji mentions:

"... **In fact the fiction of Parasurama's inveterate hostility to Kshatriyas may have been invented just to appease the dissident Nayars who after admitting the Namboodiri into the anterooms of his Tharawad and allowing love-play with the Nayar maiden, must have clamoured for Kshatriyahood in return!** This must explain the way in which the Nayars themselves were subdivided into castes, the upper strata being closer to Nambudiris and enjoying the theoretical status of Kshatriyas and living up to that tradition by accepting fighting as a profession. The parallel is complete when we find that both communities were slyly brought within the fold of the Varna system and dubbed as 'Shudras' instead of as Kshatriyas which their social rank and position warranted. ... [Nair, p.50]

Why Vellalas were not treated as Kshatriyas

Nair explains that it was not alone the unwillingness of the Brahmin cultural conqueror to admit the Vellalas to Kshatriyahood, but there was also the inherent difficulty in changing a class situation into a caste hierarchy that prevented such an elevation. Nair quotes and agrees with Prof. P. T. Srinivas Iyengar, who wrote:

"The scheme of four Varnas necessary to a people every detail of whose life for rite, could not well spread among **Tamils whose life for many millenniums (sic.) previously was mainly secular and based on social democracy** and among whom the Arya fire-rite, as it had lost its vitality before the Brahmanas migrated to Southern India, did not spread. It only led to the confusion of caste and the prevalence of social jealousies that have characterised the life of South India for a thousand five hundred years". [Srinivas Iyengar, P.T., *"Pre-Aryan Tamil Culture"*, p.20, Nair, p.50]

It may be noted that Tamils were free from Caste tyranny till about 8th century A.D., because of spread of Buddhism as early as pre-Ashoka times,

a fact accepted by scholars like I.K.Sarma. [I.K.Sarma:1988:9] It is worth noting that when Peshawa Bajirao, in later times in Maharashtra, married a Muslim woman Mastani, neither she nor her son got any recognition, whereas when King Akabar married a Rajput princess, she became the Principal Queen and her son Jehangir the Emperor of India. This is the difference between Brahmanic and non-Brahmanic ideology.

Extension of Sanskritic deities

Local deities were given Sanskritic labels, rivers compared to Ganges, e.g. Kaveri was called "Dakshin Ganga". Dr. Somasundar Bharati believes that Agathian, a sage of order of Arivars was turned into Agastya. Nair gives many examples:

"Who does not know how the **Tamil *Muruga* came to be installed as the Subramania and how the Tamilian *Avai* was metamorphosed into the *Durgai* and *Parvathi* in the Aryan pantheon. Even *Mayon* and *Mal* are believed to be old pre-Aryan Tamil names subsequently identified with the later Aryan Sun god, Vishnu.** In the course of aryanising Tamil culture in the post-Tholkappian Tamilakam, not only deities lost their Tamilian identity and got merged with some corresponding Aryan Gods but futile ingenuity never spared itself in finding even for many a familiar name of Tamil lands, river and person, fancied Aryan correlatives and inventing elaborate heraldic pedigree, in high sounding Aryan phraseology, *'Ven-kadu'* or white forest is transformed into *'Svetaranyam'* *'Tan-Porunai'* becomes *'Tembraparni'*. The oldest Tamil dynasty of the *'Pandians'* derivable from the Tamil root *'Pandai'* meaning old is now linked with the Aryan *'Pandavas'*. Therefore, that the Tamil *'Agathiyan'* also could easily be turned into the Sanskrit *'Agasthya'* need not tax our faith very considerably." [Nair, p.51]

"An ancient 'Muruga' temple situated in the eastern ghats popularly known as "Ayyappa Swami" (also considered as Buddhist in origin) became Sanskritised as 'Shastha' and therefore the son of Vishnu.

"Deities are similarly married and the new relative assumes equal importance in a new place like the older deity whose spread encompassed the new also. **The bride, of course, in this case is usually the Dravidian deity and the bridegroom is mostly Shiva e.g. marriage of goddess Meenakshi of Madurai with Shiva.** [Nair, p.52]

"The very word 'puja' (Tamil- poo + chey) which is the keyword meaning worship is a Dravidian word. The use of turmeric and vermillion is also probably a practice borrowed from the Austric speaking proto Australoid people. Ref. J, Przyluski on 'Emprunts anaryans en Indo-Aryan' quoted by Dr.

S. K. Chatterjee in *'Race Movements and Pre-historic Culture'*. Chap. VII, The Vedic Age, 1951. [Nair, fn. p.52]

"In the extension of Sanskritic deities and rituals the Brahmin showed a consummate mastery of mass psychology. In doing so the Brahmin consolidated his social control a great deal better among the simple Tamilians than he could ever do in any other part of India. **The humanization of deities was the first step for the creation of popular Hinduism(Brahminism)."** [Nair, p.53]

Creation and development of ceremonial

It must be understood that ceremonials depend upon the mythology. There are hardly any ceremonials in Buddhism specially in Thervada form, which was the original religion taught by the Buddha Himself. Even there was no ceremony to initiate a lay Buddhist, only for Bhikshus there were ceremonials. We know for sure that Buddhism had reached South India much before Ashoka's times. [I.K.Sarma:1988:9] During pre-Tholkapian days, the mythology of Tamil country was so simple that no complicated ceremonial was required. With complicated mythology of Brahmanical Puranas, ceremonials became complex. As Creedy commented, Brahmanical ceremonials were created for aesthetic satisfaction in itself, a show in fact just like a ballet. Such ceremonial became complex and remained merely a means of pleasing eye and ear. [Nair, p. 54]

Creation of ceremonials in modern times

It is not properly realized that the process is still going on. Tilak introduced two ceremonials. One was Ganesh festival to be celebrated publicly in Maharashtra, in 1893. In the beginning there were protests against it and the British Governor Sandhurst was approached in 1897, against this festival specially by the activists of Satyashodhak Samaj founded by Mahatma Phule, from Pune and Bombay, and people like Narayan Madhji Lokhande, had signed the petition. The petition mentioned that the movement started by Brahmins of Pune is a corrupt imitation of *Mohuram* festival of Muslims and is hurting the feelings of all the Muslim population of the subcontenent. But not much action was taken by the British Govt. [Amrendra Gadgil:1968:vol.6, p.28] The present day "Satya Shodhaks" are silent on the issue. What a triumph of Brahmanism!

Second was starting of celebrating "Shivaji Jayanti". Raosaheb Kasbe comments: it was ironical that Tilak, on one hand, promoted Shivaji's Birth Anniversary, but on the other, he supported the Neo Shankaracharya Brahmanalkar of Sankeswara pitha, who at foot of hill Raigad - the capital of

Shivaji - had venomously uttered that, though Shivaji was not a Kshatriya he got himself declared as such by bribing Gagabhatta, and so his clan was degraded and Gagabhatta died in Latrine. [Kasbe:1994:210 ff.]

Some of more recent examples could be cited of creation of "Santoshi mata", puja of "Satyanarayana", "Sriram shobhayatra" in Maharashtra. The "sansthan" of Saibaba at Shirdi, which had no murthi about fifty years back, has now a murthi and all rituals like a Hindu temple. Various Babas and Mathas have sprung all over the country with assumed "Mahatmyas".

Development of fine arts

The ceremonials helped developing fine arts of dance, music and sculpture. We have dealt with the subject of how dance and music were Buddhist arts and were copied by Brahmins in early twentieth century by people like Rukmini Arundale, elsewhere. We know original dancers were Devadasis, who were degraded Buddhist nuns.

The art of sculptor and architecture was the art of Buddhists. These artists were reduced to castes, as Nair says. Brahmins, being a leisure class, did not practice the strenuous varieties of these arts like Architecture and sculpture, which got passed over to those classes of people who agreed to their injunctions and abided by the rules of the caste hierarchy. Brahmins had developed sastras from practical knowledge of these Buddhists artists. This sastric knowledge was not passed over, leading to whole sets of castes developing around professions like temple building, house building and sculpture without knowing anything considerable about the theoretical basis of their practical knowledge as contained in the Sanskrit works. [Nair, p.55]

Sanskritisation of names of places

Cultural conqueror usually likes to give names to places of their choice. But in south India condition was different. Here people could not be persuaded to accept new artificial names given by Brahmins. Only newly established towns could be named in Brahmanic style, after the newly installed Sanskritic deities. Mr. Nair mentions that, Tamilnad is full of "self-suggestive and significant appellations of habitations" like Agaram, Kottam, Kottai, Pallai, Puri, Oor, Patti etc., and names ending in Nagar or Nagari or Nagaram, Mangalam are manifestly new Brahmanic creations. Sanskritic name in place of Dravidian could be given only with consent of ruling chief. [Nair, p.60]

The social self of Brahmin

Thus Brahmins gained control over what was predominantly a Buddhist population. Sanskrit and mythology had conditioned the thought process of masses. As success breeds courage, with each success in cultural domination, Brahmins acquired more and more conviction of his personal superiority. [Nair, p.61]

Buddha's Sangha was captured by Brahmins

Brahmins reacted to Buddhist revival both internally as well as externally. Earlier they joined hands with Buddhist in Sangha, to obtain benefits from royal patronage.

"Already in Ashoka's time the Brahmans had probably captured the whole machinery of the Sangha as effectually as in modern times they have controlled the inner working of British departmental machinery." [E. B. Havell's *Aryan Rule in India*, p. 148, q/b Dharmatirtha, p.99]

Their caste mentality was preserved even after becoming a Buddhist monk, and the priestly practices were brought into the Sangha, which in due course divided it into two schools, and paved the way of its own destruction.

Brahmins destroyed Buddhism from outside also

In addition to internal mechanism, converting the Sangha to a debased organization, Brahmins launched full attack from outside. In Dharmatitha's words:

"But there was deliberate Brahman opposition outside the Sangha. When the whole country was basking in the sunshine of great ideals of brotherhood and a virtuous and beneficent life, when the king and the commoner were co-operating in building up a great Indian nation, when the sacred feelings of religious devotion and patriotic benevolence roused by Buddhism were producing glorious blossoms in the field of science, literature, arts and architecture, when the people of India liberated from their bondage were carrying the joyful tidings of emancipation into distant lands and filling the world with the fragrance of the Buddha, the Brahman priests were studiously engaged in polishing the chains of imperialism and replenishing the armoury of aggression and exploitation with Manu Sastras, Sukra Nitis, Puranas, idolatrous temples, Kali worship and other literature and institutions of wily priestcraft. The Manu Sastra gave the finishing touches to the caste system and made it a masterpiece of imperial spoilation for the use of all foreign exploiters, who became masters of the country ere long." [Swami Dharmatirtha, p. 102]

Brahmanical Crusade against Buddhism

This was the time, when Brahmanism started country wide crusade against Buddhism. Speaking of this age, L. M. Joshi observes:

"...It was the age when Buddhist logic and dialectics were perfected by Dharmakirti and Shantirakshita; when Buddhist moral and spiritual fervour received supreme expression at the hands of Shantideva and Kamalashila; when some of the master minds of ancient India including Shantideva, Chandrakirti, Dharmakirti, Shantirakshita, Uddyotkara, Kumarila and Sankara, were busy in a life and death struggle for the defence of their own doctrines; when Buddhist logicians like Samkarananda and Brahmanical teachers like Gaudapada were trying to harmonise the tenets of Buddhist and Brahmnical philosophies; when Tantrika adepts like Sarahapada, Nagarjuna II, and others began to broadcast that Esoteric Gospel which soon transformed Sakymuni's Gospel, dominated the whole medieval period of Indian culture, and which, through Gorakhanantha, Kabirdasa, Nanaka and others, was transmitted down to Ramakrishna, Raman Maharshi and Sri Aurobindo of our own days; **it was during this most critical and decisive period in the history of Indian Buddhism, in fact, of Indian culture as a whole, that while a host of Buddhist Doctors of Indian Buddhist Universities were engaged in their scientific and cultural missions in distant parts of Asia, their Brahmnical counterparts at home were actively engaged in organising a countrywide intellectual and cultural crusade against Buddhist ideals and practices;** when Brahmanism, re-armed with Buddhist arsenal, sacked its rival creditor; when Tantrikism washed off distinctive traits of Buddhism and swept all religious sects of the country in one massive stream of devotional mysticism; when Buddhism began to recede into background and Brahmanism reshaped itself into 'Hinduism(Brahminism)'; considerably refined and enriched by constant contacts with Buddhist ideals and practices, and remodelled according to the new circumstances brought about by the growth and popularity of Shramanic ideologies for centuries, Brahmnism now emerged, under its Puranic garb as the undisputed national 'Hindu' culture. In the twofold process of assimilation and condemnation of Buddhism, the Brahmanical priests sacrificed at the altar of mythical Vishnu even the most historical and overwhelmingly non-Brahmanical personality of Buddha and mystified the historical existence of Buddhism as a delusive trick of a Puranic God. 'This well-conceived and bold stroke of policy', remarks R.C.Majumdar, 'cut the ground from under the feet of Buddhism which was already steadily losing ground and the ultimate result was the complete effacement of Buddhism from India as separate sect.' (The Cultural Heritage of India, 2nd edn., vol. IV,p.48) The transformation of Brahmnism or the birth of Hinduism(Brahminism), we may add, had been the

eclipse of Buddhism in its homeland - one of the major tragedies in the annals of Indian culture - a fact frequently overlooked or confused by most of our historians." [L.M.Joshi:1977:xvii]

Kautilya checked growth of Buddhism

MSS of *Arthashastra* was found in 1904, and was translated and edited by Dr. R. Shyamshatri, the then Librarian of Mysore Oriental Research Institute, in 1909. [Kasbe:1996:460] There is a great controversy about its date. Shamshatri, N.N.Law, V.A.Smith and Jayswal etc. place it in times Chadragupta Maurya, whereas Winternitz, Jolly, Keith, and Bhandarkar etc. place it much later in Gupta times. [Mahajan:1972:251] The latter view is more reasonable. Without going into issue of identification of Vishnugupta, Kautillya and Chanakya, it could safely be presumed that the *Arthashastra*, even if might have been written earlier, must have been edited and recast in Gupta times like many other Puranas etc. For our purpose, it is sufficient to note that it contained clever provisions to check the growth of Buddhism:

"No ascetic other than a Vanaprastha (forest hermit) no company other than the one of local birth and no guilds of any kind other than local co-operative guilds shall find entrance into the villages of the kingdom." [Shama Sastry, *Arthasastra*, p.54, quoted by Swami Dharmatirtha, p. 107]

Thus Buddhist monks and Sanghas could not lawfully exist in the villages. Buddhist chronicles state that when Pushyamitra Shunga usurped the throne with the help of Brahmins, he burnt Buddhist monasteries and killed many monks. Many Indian rulers suffered martyrdom at the hands of Brahmins because of their love of Buddhism. Such black deeds do not generally come out, being done in secret, but what information has leaked through leads us to a strong conclusion that a king not supporting Brahmanism was not ever safe on his throne in those days. [Dharmatirtha, p.107]

Buddhism tried to thwart attempts of Brahmanism

Even after sustaining the persecution by Pushyamitra, and later by Mihirgula, the Huna king who ordered wiping out Buddhists, there was enough power among the masses, to resist the Brahmanic aggressions, as Swamiji oberves:

"But so long as India had at least a glimmer of national life and freedom, she made incessant efforts to assert her self-respect and thwart Brahman tyranny and it was only when the country ultimately fell a victim into the hands of

foreigners the Buddhism was crushed to death and Brahmanism spread its fangs over the prostrate people." [Dharmatirtha, p.108]

Referring to Rajput period, Swamiji observes:

"For it was in the Dark Age that religious persecution began in India. Monasteries were demolished, monks were banished, and books were burnt: and wherever the Rajputs became rulers, Buddhist edifices went down and Hindu temples arose. By the end of the 10th century, Buddhism was practically stamped out from India, and the work of destruction was completed by the Muslims who succeeded the Rajputs as masters of India." [R.C.Dutt, *Epochs of Indian History*, quoted by Swami Dharmatirtha, p. 108]

Swamiji proceeds: "So complete was the destruction that modern antiquarians and historians who have gathered Buddhist sacred books from all parts of Asia have not succeeded in gleaning any valuable text from India." [Swami Dharmatirtha, p. 108]

How Brahmanism crushed Nationalism

Whenever any Indian king patronised Buddhism, there appeared an usurper or invader favouring Brahmanism. When new dynasty understood craftiness of Brahmanism, and tried to appreciate Buddhism, he was also removed, repeating this process off and on, with the help of even foreigners. These treacherous methods were justified by writing the Puranas, e.g. Mahabharata, enjoins to welcome a new powerful king and end anarchy in a king who is weak (in supporting Brahmins), says C.V.Vaidya (Epic India, p.195) These powers in the hands of Brahmins were used to curb opposition against them.

Chapter 3

FOREIGN INVASIONS AND CASTE
Foreigners were assimilated by Buddhist ideals and not the Brahmanic

History of foreign invasions in India is so vast that we can touch only important points. When Dr. Ambedkar commented that the history of India is the history of defeats, agrieved Sawarkar had to write "*saha soneri pane*", to aver that their culture is so great that there is no trace left of invaders like Sakas, Kusahnas, Hunas etc. "Did the Hindus lead an honourable life?", retorted Ambedkar, back. Historical Writing of Sawarkar is considered more of a fantacy than history, by scholars like Raosaheb Kasbe, and rightly so, and needs to be ignored. In any case, the credit of assimilating foreigners goes to Buddhists, as L. M. Joshi, avers that the assimilation of foreigners into Indian society took place not because of Brahmanism but because of the tenets of Buddhism which preached equality, liberty and brotherhood in the following words:

"Another aspect of Buddhist contribution in ancient India lay in the area of social harmony and racial integration on a national scale, It was through Buddhist influence and teaching of social harmony and tolerance that foreign invaders such as the Greeks, Sakas, Pahlavas, Kusanas and Hunas who came to India and settled here in the course of centuries immediately preceding and following the Christian era, were assimilated by Indian society. This was a permanent contribution to social integration and national growth and it could not have been so easily accomplished in a strictly Brahmanical scheme of social gradation without the wholesome effects of the Buddhist disregard for varna- organization and respect for the liberty of the individual." [L.M.Joshi:1973:52]

Hindu Muslim Conflict would not have been there if Buddhism was alive at the time of Muslim invasion

Not only that but he laments that the assimilation of Muslims could not be done into Indian society, because of the feeling of supremacy of their caste that was being practiced by the Brahmins of those days, as he says:

"We are of the view that had Buddhism been a living force at the time of the Turkish invasions, the problems of Hindu- Muslim communal discord in medieval and modern India would not have taken such a strong turn as

they did. Because of the revival of the traditional Brahmanical social scheme, reinforced with fresh religious injunctions, and because of the decline of Buddhism in India after the tenth century A. D., the mass of early medieval early Islamic followers in India could not be assimilated and digested by Indian Society. Arnold J. Toynbee has rightly remarked that, "If either Buddhism or Jainism had succeeded in captivating the Indic world, caste might have got rid of. As it turned out, however, the role of universal church in the last chapter of Indic decline and fall was played by Hinduism(Brahminism), a parvenu archaistic syncretism of things new and old; and one of the old things to which Hinduism(Brahminism) gave new lease was caste." [A study of History, (abridged by D. C. Somerville) vol. I, New York, 1969, p. 350]

Indians under Brahmanic ideology lacked unity

To the question, why Indians were defeated by Alexander, V. A. Smith observed: "The triumphant progress of Alexander from the Himalayas to the sea demonstrated the inherent weakness of the Asiatic armies when confronted with European skill and discipline." Mahajan disagreeing with this view opined that armies of small republican states were defeated because they lacked leadership. Because they had no organization and no unity of direction, and there was no pooling of resources, various states were defeated one by one. On the contrary Chandragupta Maurya could drive away Greeks because of united front. [Mahajan, *Ancient India*, p. 244] But it means the same thing. They lacked leadership because under Brahmanic ideology, every tribe thought to be superior to another, and fought dividedly and lost. So if you avoid the play of words, what V. A. smith said seems to be true about inherent defect in Brahmanic culture. We will discuss the salient points about important invasions.

Alexander's Invasion

First big and remarkable invasion, after the Aryan Invasion, was the invasion by Alexander, who stayed only for 19 months in India (c.327 B.C.), but had tremendous indirect effects. How Alexander gained entry in India, is explained:

"... the idea of a common Indian nationality, in whose cause he and his brother kings might stand together against the stranger, did not even occur to him (raja of Taxila) : India was too large and too disunited for the mind to embrace it as a unity. ... His policy was largely governed by his antagonism to the rival princess of the Paurava house (Porrus). ... his

safest course lay in allying himself with the European, riding on the crest of wave that would sweep his rival to destruction. ... but if the raja hesitated, his son Aambhi ... pressed his father to place his principality at the Yavana king's disposal. **While Alexander was still in Bukhara, Aambhi began to negotiate on his own account. Envoys from Taxila made their way over ridges over Hindu Kush. They were charged with the message, that Aambhi was ready to march by Alexander's side, against any Indians who might refuse to submit. ..."** [E. R. Bevan:1968:313]

Thus, it was Aambhi, the Prince of Taxila - a powerful Brahmanic stronghold - who welcomed Alexander and invited him to fight against Porus. How Brahmins wielded powers on the people and kings is described in next chapter. Suffice here to say that Brahmins had communications links with foreign forces, as Swami Dharmatirtha observed:

"The north-western region of India was the gateway of all invaders and here it was that the Brahmans had one of their most important strongholds for many centuries, holding constant communication with foreigners such as the Greeks, the Turks, the Scythians, the Chinese and the Huns." [Swami Dharmatirtha, p. 97]

Brahmins obtained foreign help to topple unwanted kings

Swamiji further observes:

"Whenever the Brahmans wanted the help of foreigners to bring about the downfall of a king or a dynasty which they disliked, their position of vantage in north-western India afforded facilities as well as a strong temptation to invite or encourage the invasion of foreigners, and as we shall see hereafter, they freely utilized this favourable situation to enforce their supremacy in the country. These temporal advantages in addition to the unique position they occupied as the exclusive custodian of religious lore and experts in many branches of learning, enabled them to control the leading strings in every sphere of life of a community, the vast majority of whom had been denied all learning and freedom for many centuries. In these and other ways the Brahman's grip on the destinies of the country was indeed greater than we can fancy form this distance of time. ..." [Swami Dharmatirtha, p. 98]

Ashoka was Buddhist even before the Kalinga War

Often Buddha's *ahinsa* is blamed for loss of virility of masses in India. It is a wrong malicious propaganda. That Ashoka converted himself to Buddhism after he got aggrieved by the loss of life during the war, and then he adopted Buddhism is the common belief. There is no proof to support this view. He was married to Vidisha Devi, when he was Governor of Vidisha. She was a Buddhist. This proves that he was Buddhist even before he became the Emperor.

No doubt, he mentioned in his edict XIII that he was grief stricken due loss of life, but it is note worthy that he did not put down the arms. He did not say war must not be resorted to. As a matter of fact, in the same edict, he warns people to stick to the "dhamma", or else face the consequences. The same edict mentions the regions under his control and concludes with a remark that this edict is written so that his heirs would not resort to war to annex more territories. And if it becomes necessary to resort to war, the restraint should be observed and punishment should be minimum, and to remember that victory by "dhamma" is the real victory. [Meshram:1998:55]

So the "ahimsa", taught by Buddha or by Ashoka was only against violence against animals in Vedic sacrifices. Neither Buddha was against war, nor Ashoka was against war in case it was necessary. But the fact remains, that the Brahmins made a strong propaganda that Ashoka laid down the arms. Perhaps Kallahana was responsible for it, in 12th century A.D. [Mahajan:1972:277]

Arab Invasion of Sind in early 8th century

Chach-Nama is the chronicle giving most of the history of this region. King Sahiras, son of Sahasi Rai ruled over areas extending to Kashmir in North, Kanauj in East and Makran in west, with capital at Alor. The account agrees with that of Huen Tsang, who has mentioned the king was a Sudra. After his death, his son Rai Sahasi II came on throne. A Brahmin minister, named Chach, usurped the throne after his death, some times after 640 A.D. The provincial Governors refused to acknowledge his supremacy, but were subdued. Chach married the widow of king and had two sons. One of them was Dahir, who was ruling when Md. Bin Qasim invaded. It is said that Buddhist priests were in contact with Hajjaj and now openly helped Md. Qasim. Superstitious beliefs were that the books mentioned conquest by Muslims. According to Chach-Nama, Qasim was called back and put to death by Hajjaj, because two daughters of Dahir

told him that they were defiled by Qasim before sending them to him. [Majumdar:1988:170]

Tyranny of Brahmins over Buddhist population

Usually these days, the Brahmanic scholars blame the Buddhists, for helping the Muslims during Arab invasion of Md. Bin Qasim in 712 A. D. For example, K. M. Munshi, gives three reasons for Hindus' failure, viz. (i) unpatriotic character of the Buddhists, (ii) general superstition of section of people (iii) want of loyalty towards family of royal usurpers. [Munshi:1988:xxv] However, he accepts that machinery introduced by Guptas meaning *chaturvanya* was continuing, and King had just recently won a "Civil war" and was an usurper. And R. C. Majumdar avers that "all the Buddhists did not support the Muslims and some actually fought against them. On the other hand, many non- Buddhists also betrayed the king and country." [Majumdar:1988:170]

That the Buddhist population who did not accept the supremacy of Brahmins were condemned to be untouchables by boycott and torture by the Brahmins, is a fact in History. In this connection, Kosare narrates an example in Sind, and observes similar thing happened to Mahars in Maharashtra.

"The religious leaders of Brahmanism hated the Buddhists. At the same time, they were afraid of these valorous, brave, gallant Buddhist warriors. An example of such a society being reduced subservient is worth quoting from history.

"In 650 A.D., in Sind, when King Sahasi died, his kingdom was usurped by his Brahmin minister Chach. Sahasi was a Buddhist and so were his subject population. In the Southern Sind, the Jats and Luhana communities were controlling the affairs. Chach defeated them and reduced their social status and put many restrictions over them. Luhana and Jat communities considered themselves as Kshatriyas. Brahmin Chach issued an order against these brave people that they must not bear any arms unless in dire emergency. They must wear black and red clothes. They must ride the horse without a saddle. While walking through the streets, they must not wear any head dress or use any foot wear. While going out, they must carry a dog with them as symbol of their caste. Similarly, they must keep the supply of fuel wood to the Subhedar of Brahmanabad. They must show the way to him and act as a spy and be honest with him. The information that such an order was passed by

Chach is available in "Chach- Nama". After death of Chach, these restrictions were continuing over them in the reign of his son.

"These people are referred to as Lakha and Samma in Chach- Nama. When Md. Bin Qasim captured this territory, he continued these restrictions over these brave Luhana and Jat communities on the recommendation of Brahmins." [C. V. Vaidya, "*madhya yugin bharat*", book 2, pp.5-10, 40, quoted by Kosare:1989:265]

Such was the attitude of Brahmins towards the Buddhist. Under such circumstances, what kind of loyalty can be expected from these Jat and Lohana Buddhists? R. C. Majumdar is shrewd enough to hide these facts and blame on Buddhists' idea of non-violence and their "ideal of religious fraternity" transgressing nation or country, [Majumdar:1988:170] conveniently ignoring that what we today call nationality was unknown in those days. The "Civil war" mentioned by Munshi above was actually a genocide against the Buddhists. If we study history, so that it may guide us in future actions, you should be honest enough to depict the truth. Mere hiding the facts can not keep a large section in slavery. **It has happened all the time that the condemned masses always found liberation, wherever they could.**

Let us remember what S. A. Dange said about evaluating the history of Muslim conquests, alluding that **tyranny of the masses was the cause of their success.** He observed that, present historians cannot really make proper assessment as to how this tide of Muslims spread through the wilderness of deserts all over the world just on the mere basis of a Divine Message, how this mere tribal society succeeded where the likes of Alexander, Ashoka or Napoleon failed. If it was merely an onslaught of hordes, then in the past the Greeks and Romans, Alexander and Caesar had also attempted, and our history is full of aggressions by Atila's White Hunas and Red Hunas, later, even Maratha hordes had down poured on Northern India. How do you correlate these historical facts to explain the Muslim conquest? **Dange avers that these are the problems facing Indian historians and it would not be solved merely by hollow talk of nationalism.** [Dange: 1998: thirteen]

Bahujan masses welcomed aliens to protect themselves from Brahmanical tyranny

A Christian Ambedkarite, Sunil Sardar, has very aptly remarked while delivering a keynote address at the state level "Ambedkarvadi Sahitya

Sammelan" recently that, throughout the history of this country, at all times whenever the Bahujan society was tired of the tyranny of the then ruling classes, every time, we find that the Bahujans welcomed the 'alien' rulers. [Sardar:2000:9]

Gaznavid invasion

It is not necessary to speak of the repeated conquests of Muhammad of Gazani and the loot and massacre. That is well known. What was the purpose of this loot? It was money, riches stored by the Brahmins in their temples. For example the Somnath temple had a treasury adjacent to linga, under its pedestal. The income of the temple was derived from ten thousand villages endowed to the temple and offerings. All this public money was for use of one thousand Brahmin *pujaris*, who entertained a belief that Muhammad could demolish so many idols elsewhere, only because those deities had lost the support of Somnatha. So when Muhammad came there, in January 1025, the Brahmins were passing time merry making and thought that Somnatha had drawn the Muslims there only to annihilate them for their past sins elsewhere, all this superstition leading to massacre. [Ganguli:1989:5] Majumdar, discussing the general causes of Muslim victory, rightly observes:

"... The enormous wealth of the country was spent in building and enriching the temples which they proved unable to protect, whereas the most appropriate use of these resources should have been to organize a common defence against the invaders, backed by a national effort. On the contrary, it was the very fabulous wealth of these defenceless temples and sacred towns which invited the foreigners and contributed greatly to consequent disaster." [Majumdar:1989:128]

Have we learnt any lessons in 21st century. Do we still not adore the idols with crores worth of jewelry? Do we not still hesitate to derecognise the deities as holders of property? Should a common man lament upon the loss of property, which in any case was not meant for his betterment, to foreign invaders? The point is, that time, or for that matter even today, the 85 percent of population was not considered by the ruling class to be citizens. That is the reason why Chatrapati Shivaji was denied coronation, Shahu denied Vedic rites, Phule driven out from marriage procession, Ambedkar denied learning of Sanskrit. This is not only an inference, but when Shahu made the facilities for education available to the non-Brahmins, the Brahmin scholars were very much annoyed and their leader Tilak expressed the anger in a public speech made at town Athani

where he said why the non-Brahmins have to obtain literacy, they don't have to participate in municipalities etc., the only avenues of politics for Indians, showing that in his opinion, after swaraj only Brahmins had the right to rule, and that is what exactly happened after swaraj.

For the tyrannical behaviour of Muhammad of Gazani, the privileged castes Hindus are responsible, believes L. R. Bali, who quotes Jawarlal Nehru's Discovery of India, p.247:

"Muhammad enrolled an army in India and placed it under one of his noted generals, Tilak by name, who was an Indian, and a Hindu." [Bali:1988:223]

Jaichandra was not a traitor

It is usually described that King Jaichandra was the one who invited Md. Ghori to invade Prithwiraj Chauhan. This injustice would not have been removed if we did not find the inscriptions of Jaichandra and a Tibetan version of text called *"Chandraraj Lekh".* Jaichandra was son of Vijaychandra (1155-1170 A.D.) and grandson of Govindchandra of Gahadval clan. His education was arranged by his grandfather and grand mother, the famous Buddhist Queen Kumardevi, at Varanasi under Bhikshu Jaganmitranand, who was the Head of Sangha and was also considered a "Siddha", though the 84 Siddhas' period was already over. The Tibetans even today consider him with respect just like Siddhas. The Tibetan translations of his 20 books are still available. In one of his texts, "Chandraraj Lekh" is also available. It describes the valour and religiosity of Jaichandra.

An inscription found in Buddha Gaya describes in detail the relationship of Jaichandra with Jaganmitranand, confirming that he was the Head of Sangha and was "*diksha guru*" of Jaichandra, i.e. he had given him "diksha" of Buddhism. He was highly influenced by his grand mothers Kumardevi and Basantidevi, who were great disciples of Mahayana, and had donated land and grants to viharas at Shravasti, Sarnath, Varanasi, Kanauj, Nalanda and Buddha Gaya. He used to visit viharas at Sarnath in childhood with his grand mother. [Dharmarakshit:1956:65]

His reign

He was well trained in art of war, and is mentioned in copper plates of Vijaychandra (1168 A.D.) as "Yuvaraja", and was coronated in 1170 A.D., when his father Vijaychandra died. His reign of nearly 24 years was

glorious. He was patron of Buddhist Bhikkus and Brahmins, and creator of many forts. Though Gahadvals are mentioned as rulers of Kanauj, their main capital was Kashi. Sarnath inscription of Kumardevi mentions Govindchandra as "Kashi-Naresh", and Kanauj was their sub-capital. After fall of Prithwiraj Chauhan in 1192 A.D., Md. Ghori attacked his kingdom but was repulsed by him. At the same time, Senas from east invaded him and whole of Magadha was captured by them. End of this last great monarch of India came in a war of Chandawar near Etawa, fighting against Md. Ghori.

He was maligned without any reason

Many scholars have blamed him as traitor on the basis of "Prithwiraj Raso", a creation of a bard named Chanda Bardai. Raso says Prithwiraj had been loved by Jaichandra's daughter Sanyogita, as well as daughter of King Nahaddev of Abu, and he abducted them one by one. Raso also mentions King Samarsingh of Mewad being killed in a battle of Taravadi. But the researches by scholars have proved all this false. Samarsingh was 150 years later than Prithwiraj and King Nahaddev was centuries earlier than him. **Sanyogita is thus an imaginary heroine of Raso.**

Author of Raso calls himself as contemporary of Prithwiraj, but all genealogy given by him is wrong and M. M. Dr. Gaurishankar Hirachand Ojha has conclusively proved that Raso is not created before 16th century. "Prabandhkosh" also wrongly blames him. As a matter of fact, there was no friendship or enmity between Jaichandra and Prithwiraj. [Dharmarakshit:1956:63] Scholars like D. C. Ganguli also believe that Raso is a work of later period and the stories in it are highly unreliable, romantic and improbable. [Ganguli:1989:105]

The question nobody likes to deal with is **why in the sixteenth century, Brahmins needed to eulogize the three centuries old Pruthwiraj as a hero and malign Jaychandra, the last great non- Muslim Monarch of India flourishing 300 years ago. Jaichandra being known to have Buddhist leanings, was it anti-Muslim propaganda or an anti-Buddhist one?**

Singhal: Dalits creation of Islamic invaders

Long time back, Dr. Ambedkar has discussed how untouchability was imposed by the Brahmins because of hatred towards Buddhism, still there

is a false propaganda against Muslims. Following two passages will be illuminating:

"VARANASI, June 15 (UNI)

"General secretary of the banned Vishwa Hindu Parishad Ashok Singhal has propounded a new historical theory claiming that "Dalits were the creation of non-Hindutva forces which ruled this country before the British."

"Addressing a press conference here last night, Mr.Singhal termed Dalits as "descendants of great freedom fighters who posed stiff challenge to Islamic invaders for hundreds of years".

"Mr.Singhal said that nowhere in Hindu scriptures Dalits as a caste had been defined as untouchables to subdue them", he claimed.

"Citing examples of various Dalit rulers of the past such as Suheldev Paswan and Stan Pasi, both former rulers of Behraich, he said such was the might of these Dalit rulers that Muslim invaders could not dare to enter their territory for more than 175 years.

"The VHP leader said it was time to restore the self-pride of Dalits and this could be done by putting their history in the right perspective." - The Hindustan Times, 16 June 1995

'Untouchability is a creation of Islam'

"Now I feel that as the BSP people and the Chief Minister, Mayawati, come in contact with the BJP and what is now known as the Sangh Parivar, they will begin to understand how discrimination against Dalits started and came into actual practice. We believe that all communities were equal and all enjoyed the same rights till the advent of Islamic and Christian rule.

"Humiliations began to be heaped only after the Islamic invasion of our country. It was because of the repression of different communities that fought the Islamic invaders and defined conversion into Islam that they had to suffer humiliation and tortures. These communities were uprooted from their home and hearth for defying the invaders and not giving up their religion.

"As a result: they became poor and had to suffer a lot. These suffering communities came to be treated as untouchables with the invaders perpetrating unspeakable horrors on them. Therefore, I say that untouchability is a creation of Islam." - The Sunday Observer, July 30-August 5, 1995 [Naim:1998]

Is there any necessity to comment on these remarks?

Causes of Muslim victory over the Hindus

R. C. Majumdar describes the collapse of Hindu Rule as "puzzling, nay, almost baffling" in a short time by invaders whose resources were "hardly equal to those of some of the bigger Hindu states, not to speak of a combination of them". Within limitations, of unavailability of Brahmanic sources, he explains the causes were:

"... The foremost among these seem to be the iniquitous system of caste and absence of contact with the outside world. The first resulted in a fragmentation of Indian society into mutually exclusive classes, among whom the privileged minority preserved their vested interest by depriving the masses of many civic rights, specially of education and of free intercourse and association on equal terms with their fellow men, and further, by imposing on them the most irritating disabilities on one hand, and a tremendous weight of innumerable duties and obligations towards the privileged classes on the other. ..." [Majumdar:1989:126]

Quoting Al-Biruni, on narrow mindedness of Hindus, he proceeds to say:

"... This spirit of exclusive superiority was created and maintained by a process of intellectual fraud, in as much as almost the entire literature of the period was utilized for this purpose and the masses were asked to follow it blindly in the name of Holy Writ, to question whose authority was an unpardonable sin. ... Then again, the false ideals of Kshatriya chivalry, taught them by their mentors, made the Rajput princes paralyse one another by perpetual internecine conflicts, and what was more fatal, made them oblivious of a broad national vision and patriotic sentiment. ... The utter and precipitate prostration of such a vast and ancient land endowed with resources far superior and greater to those of her invaders, can be the result of mainly of internal decay and not merely of external attacks, which were its effects rather than the cause." [Majumdar:1989:128]

In the light of above, coming from a proud proponent of Brahmanism, the cause of fall of India to Muslim, was the Decline and Fall of Buddhism, and the words of L. M. Joshi, at the beginning of this tract, are very apt.

Chapter 4

CASTE SYSTEM
How Hindus enjoyed Brahmanic slavery?

Inhuman qualities of Hinduism(Brahminism) like graded inequality, ban on inter-dining, forced endogamy, polluting touch, and restriction on occupation are enumerated as evils of Hindu caste system. Dr. Ambedkar has described the genesis of caste and its horrors and its place in a Hindu's life. The perplexing question is, how did the multitude of masses tolerate the domination and atrocities of the priestly class. Out of many reasons is the theory of *karma* which was propagated which more or less castrated the society and deprived all the masses from the motivation to revolt. The acharyas preached that the reason for man to be poor is the deeds of his past lives, the '*purva-karmas*'. One is born in a low caste and remains in misery because of his past '*karmas*'. The varna system, caste system, high and low, poor and rich, touchables and untouchables, all these are due to past karmas. This one theory has made all the Hindus the slaves of Brahmins. And the caste governs the whole life of a Hindu, and because this system started with the start of decline of Buddhism, and grew stronger day after day and brought India to the state she is in now, it becomes the subject matter of our study.

Rigvedic Society had three Varnas

As is well known, there is no mention of "caste" i.e. "jati", in any of the Vedic literature, and is mentioned for the first time in "Nirukta". It is believed by some scholars that at the time of compilation Rig Veda, there was no system of Varnas in Indian society, and that much after Rig Veda was compiled the "Purush Sukta" was appended to Rig Veda and that was the begining of *Chaturvarnya* System which degenerated later into caste system. Even if we ignore "Purush Sukta" for the time being, this view can not be correct as words Brahmin, Rajanya and Vaisha occur in Rig Veda a number of times. But Shudra occurs for the first time in Purush Sukta, **thereby proving there were only three varnas at the time of Rig Veda.** [Ambedkar, W&S:7:132]

Date of Purush-sukta

The fourth varna, i.e. of Shudras was added by "*purusha- sukta*". Though all scholars agree that Purush sukta is a later addition, the exact time of its compilation has not been mentioned by them. Bhadant Anand Kausallyayan

tells us that **the word "Purushottam" occurs for the first time in Pali texts and was first only applied to the Buddha.** [Anand Kausallyayan, "*bhagwat gita aur dhammapad*", p.27.]

After one hundred and fifty years after the Mahaparinirvana of the Buddha, the word "Purusha" occurs for the first time, in Brahmin books, in *Katha* Upanishada. As has been amply proved by the scholars like L. M. Joshi and Dharmanand Kosambi, all the Upnishadas are later than the Buddha. A. L. Basham and William Berry assign B.C. 400 - 200 to Katha Upnishada.

Thus the concept of "Purusha" is Buddhist and was incorporated in Katha Upanishada for the first time as a concept of obsolute and kind god-head about century and half after the Buddha. Later this was developed and incorporated in Rig Veda as *Purush- sukta*. Why this became necessary? Principal M. M. Sao of Buddhist College believes that Brahmins managed to kill two birds in one stone thereby. It was a planned attack to destroy the egalatarian Buddhist society. It was designed, firstly, to stop Kshatriya revolt against Brahmins by accepting Upnishadas, the creations of the Kshatriyas. Second purpose was to stop the flow of Shudras towards Buddha's Dhamma, by incorporating them in Varna system as the fourth varna. [Sao M. M: 1998: 3]

The sexual behaviour of Aryans

Noted Communist Leader Shripad Amrut Dange, narrates the tragedy of unfinished book of Rajwade titled *bharatiya vivah sanshte cha itihas*, whose first chapter was published in a magazine '*chitramaya jagat*' in May 1923 from Poona. It narrated how the **ancient Aryan society did not have the marriage institution as we believe it today, or rather had no marriage institution at all. The barbarous Aryan society considered no relationship like brother-sister, father-daughter.** All his observations were based on Veda samhitas and evidences from Mahabharata. The subject matter of the book was to explain how this kind of uncontrolled sexual relationship progressed. But the very first chapter caused turbulence in Maharashtrian elite and the publisher was threatened with dire consequences, leading to stoppage of printing of this book. Shri Dange tried to publish the book but could not succeed. It was ultimately published rather in uncompleted form for the first time in 1976. [p.seven - "bharatiya vivaha sanshthe cha itihas", (marathi), Introduction by Dange] Dange wonders why Indian scholars have not discussed the diverse marriage systems, that is, sexual relationship of a man and a woman in ancient Aryan society, in spite

of reading the Vedas and the sanctions of even Manu to these marriages. Though the books of Darwin, Latourneau and Bashophen were available nobody tried to write the history of Hindu Marriage Systems, and when Rajwade tried to do so in 1920-23, the publisher was threatened to death. There are numerous lawyers who argue the marriage litigations in courts. Why none of them took up the subject of types of marriages, ban on sagotra and sapinda marriages? [introduction p. fifteen] Dange tells us that Rajwade was the first person to deal with the subject of state-varna- caste-class relationship explaining when, where, why and how the Aryans created Varna and caste. [p.17, introduction]

People could transgress from one varna to other. But this rule had changed. More population was an asset for self procreation and preservation, which was the aim of primitive sexual relationship. Rajwade has explained how the priests had to satisfy the sexual demand of any woman approaching them at the time of *yajnyas*, then and there in open ground, in presence of Vedic fire. This gave rise to terms like "ayonija", usually applied to Sita and Droupadi, meaning born outside the house - the original meaning of *yoni* being house. [Rajwade, ibid. p.39] **After the results of community procreation, where every male could procreate on every female, were known and knowledge of incest grew, the restrictions were put on the uncontrolled sex.** The examples seen in Vedas in Yama Yami dialogue and Vedic rites in Yajnyas which were meant for distribution of production and became a subject matter of divine prayers and charity. When the means of production increased and the tools and skills grew, there appeared different social occupational groups. But there were no differences among them and no ban on inter marriage among the different Varnas and on procreation of *'sankara'* i.e. hybrid progeny. When such a varna system was progressing leading to prosperity of society the traditional skills developed and a ban on inter-marriage came making water tight compartments.

Conversion from three varna society to four varna society was a great revolution in Aryan society, says Rajwade. This was done by coming of the shudras who until then had no rightful place in three varna society. Shudras who were thought to be untouchable and impure until then were now considered touchable and pure. Of course, the shudras had the obligation of following the Laws of three upper varnas. **"Because of entry of shudras into Chaturvana system, society got transformed from savage society to rural one."** As shudras did all the jobs requiring manual labour there was a lot of leisure time for Vaishyas to do business, Ksatriyas to look after defense of country and Brahmins to develop learning, leading to

tremendous prosperity of Aryans in Northrn Kuru. The author of Purush Sukta boasts about growth of horses, cows, goats and lambs, enlargement *(upbruhan)* of four Vedas, and occupation of all lands around Vairajya, since the creation of four varnas. [intoduction p. 18]

The Buddha discarded Varna System

Thus we see from above description that Shudras were made the beasts of burden with all the forced labour duties and no rights. And this occured, as early as, the times of Buddha. Naturally, He revolted against the system of Varnas and that the Buddha discarded varna system of Brahmanism and castes arising out of it, is well known. The Caste System became more strict after the fall of Buddhism. Ferguson observes that Buddhists had no caste and that caste:

"... revived when a second upheaval of local superstition under Aryan influence on the decay of Buddhism brought Shaivism and Vaishnavism to the surface, together with all the monstrosities of the modern Hindu pantheon." [Fergusson: 1971: 63]

Ashokan Society was integrated

Like every other society, India also had different groups of people in the society, living in proximity with one another, practicing different customs, manners and worshiping different local Gods and Goddesses. It is accepted that, in such situations, the process of unity passes through stages unless purposefully stopped. The first stage is political, where people live under same king and same state under the same laws. This is only superficial unity. The second stage is religious harmony, where people have same worshiping symbols and follow similar methods of culture such as language, dress and other external symbols. The last stage is the social integration, where society becomes one by inter-marrying. This forms the coherent integrated society. Such was the society created at the Asokan times by the teachings of the Buddha. The people were following various professions but they were free to marry each others. This was the free Indian society.

Caste hierarchy

Dr. Ambedkar has explained that within such a society, though there was exogamy of *gotra*, based on primitive totemic structure i.e. people were marrying only outside the gotra, there was no limit of endogamy and no restriction of choice of caste. At such a stage, Brahmins segregated

themselves and stopped marrying outside their varna. Others imitated. So some closed their door and some found it closed agaist them. [Ambedkar W&S:1:18] Swami Dharmatirtha is explaining similar situation:

"Though the scheme of caste hierarchy had not been generally accepted by the kings and the people, the priests had irrevocably separated themselves from the bulk of the community as the Brahman caste and developed their distinctive characteristics and interests and ideals which have from those ancient days down to the present always remained antagonistic to the progress of the nation as a whole. ..." [Swami:1946:62]

Thus the present Caste system, if it deserves a term of "system", is a post Buddhistic phenomenon coming to prominence after fall of Buddhism around tenth century, though its roots existed since Buddha's times.

How Occupations became castes

Brahmanism ammmended their laws through Kalivarjya, hostilities against Buddhists were started, a religious crusade started through physical force by Rajputs created by Brahmins, Philosophical propaganda arranged by Kumarila and Shankara, Buddha was given a place in avataras as a stategy, Vaishnava Alvaras and Shaiva Nayanaras started *"bhajan parties"* and started "singing out Buddhism", Puranas were edited and re-edited to incorporate new revival of Brahmanism, and myths created to capture the Buddhist places of worship and to retain the usurped ones. That the *"kalivarj"* is the method of Brahmins to tackle with the Buddhist influence over the masses and impose their own supremacy. They changed their laws without actually condemning them. All laws and rules, were amended including Civil, Criminal, Revenue and personal laws. Dr. P.V.Kane has enumerated 55 such changes. [Kane: 1965: II.994] These can be placed in three groups, and are discussed by us elsewhere. [K.Jamanadas:1991:131]

Kings had no legislative powers

Brahmanism is not limited to Brahmins alone. It has a vast canvas and it is seen in all spheres of human activity but more prominent in political sphere. The politics of this country is run on the Manu's constitution since centuries. It is important to understand that the kings and emperors of ancient and medieval India did not have any legislative powers. They were only executives of the so called divine laws made by the priestly class. The wars they fought were for defending the laws of the "*Dharmasastras"* codified by

Manu and others, on the advise, rather orders, of their *"purohits"*. As a matter of fact, they had an obligation to enforce the code of conduct as dictated by the Brahmins. That is why we find that King Rama had to kill Shambuka, who was transgressing the Law of Chaturvarnya. At the most, the king could only legislate on revenue matters, that too, as per the rules already laid down by the Brahmins. He had some judicial powers, but that too, he could not pass judgment against the law given by the Brahmins. It may be interesting to know that some scholars now claim Shambuka belonged to *"Teli"* community.

Who suffered in Kalivarjya

In Kalivarjya, one of the main laws was against sea voyage. That is how the sea worthy races of Pallava and Chola countries suffered. All the trade that was being conducted through the sea stopped. Who suffered? Not the Brahmins, surely. The first group that suffered was that of ship builders, mostly the working class dealing with metal and wood, i.e. the carpenters and black smiths. All produers of exportable goods suffered most. It will be clear, if we take a look at the products of export that most of the products of export were based on the agriculture, horticulture, animal husbandry and forest economy. Even the textile industry which had reached a high acclaim in foreign lands, was based on cotton, silk and wool. All these occupations were in the hands of working classes, who were all doomed to be shudras. All these industries suffered. All these castes in the village economy suffered. All these groups, which were prosperous during the Buddhist rule, were degraded into castes, due to imposition of rigid caste rules. Details are given in Chapter on Science.

The mobility of the professions was stopped. *Telis*, who extracted oil from oil seeds, *Malis*, who grew vegitables, the *Dhangars*, who reared the goats and lambs, *Sutars*, who made and repaired the farmers implements, *Kumhar*, those who supplied earthen pots to villagers and *Mahars* and *Mangs* who protected the villages from strangers. All these professions became hereditary and social intercourse among them stopped. All these people who belonged to the same stock, as proved by Dr. Ambedkar, started observing endogamy, stopped intermarrying and became victims of "Sanskritization", i.e. the process of claiming higher status in caste heiararchy than to discard the system of castes. The purpose of imposing Kalivarjya was not only to suppress Buddhism, but also stop the economic growth of OBCs, which is not properly realised. Brahmins knew the latter would imitate them, as

originally, kalivarjya was technically meant for Brahmins.

Supremacy of Brahmins

Brahmins, not only created a caste out of the varna, keeping the same name of caste as that of varna itself, and different names for others, but also claimed superiority. Swami Dharmatirtha explains:

"... They claimed to be a superior race of men, by their very origin entitled to demand and enforce submission from all other sections of society, they asserted their right to the exclusive possession of all religious learning and leadership, they contended that the worldly power of the king was subject to the spiritual authority of the Brahmans, and that in vital respects such as the liability to taxes and punishment they were to be exempted from the operation of the ordinary law of the land, their religious practices and customs assumed a distinctive shape, and the sacred thread they began to wear always marked them off from the Indian peoples whom they treated with haughty contempt, they held it was below their dignity to engage in the ordinary avocations of life such as agriculture, trade, arts and crafts." [Swami:1946:62]

Brahmin has vested interests

They developed vested interests. They wished others to remain uneducated, ignorant and supersticious. Swamiji explains:

"In fact, the Brahmans became a nation by themselves, interested in the religious and social domination and exploitation of the people of India. Their interest demanded, not the propagation of religion, but the keeping of it as a secret and a monopoly. The unification and education of the people became antagonistic to their policy, which demanded division into castes and submissiveness to the priestly authority, suppression of all aspirations to rise in culture and power, and encouragement of superstition for the profitable plying of priestcraft. **It did not matter much to them who fought and won, and who ruled the country, whether they were Aryan kings or Indian rulers, or foreign conquerors. They sided with party which favoured Brahman superiority and domination.** Therefore, although the Mahabharata war was waged for the liberal ideals of the Bhagavad Gita as opposed to the orthodox creed of Brahmanism, and though it ended in a victory for the former, it no less effectively served to destroy the power of the Kshatriyas, the leaders of the opposition to Brahmanism." [Swami:1946:63]

Brahmins were most powerful For those who have a misconception that Brahmins were doing selfless service without caring for monetary benifits, here is what Swamiji observes:

"The Brahmans cared not only for honour and the gifts, which were not withheld, but wanted to be the highest power in the land, above the people and the king, to be the law-givers, the king-makers and the king-killers, as they had been accustomed to be. They were, in spite of Buddhism, still holding tremendous worldly powers, they were a wealthy community, and could carry out their imperialistic designs in numerous ways." [Swami:1946:95]

Duty of king was to worship Brahmins

For those who blame Rama for killing Shambuka, it would be sufficient to say that Ram Raj was a rule of Brahmins based on Chaturvanya, and it was duty of king to work for welfare of Brahmins. Bhandarkar has following to say:

"In the Mahabharata Bhishma says to Yudhishtra, "the highest duty of a crowned king is to worship learned Brahamans; they should be protected as one protects oneself or one's children, and be respected, bowed to and revered as if they were one's parents. If Brahamans are contented the whole country prospers; if they are discontented and angry, everything goes to destruction. They can make a god, not a god, and a not-god, a god. One whom they praise, prospers and one whom they reproach becomes miserable." [Bhandarkar R.G., *Peep into Early History of India*, p.65, quoted by Swami:1946:95]

This was not an empty claim

The threat to masses from the Brahmins was not imaginary. It was real, and often practiced, as Swamiji puts it:

"This audacious claim which the Brahman writers of the Mahabharata so boldly made could not have been a meaningless or baseless self-adulation only. It contained a good deal of truth. The Brahamans were a terrible power for good and evil, for evil more often good, like the feudal Baron robbers of Europe. The Murder of King Vena for the violation of Brhamanical laws was not a solitary instance of the tyrannical power of the Brahamans. **Their right to kill troublesome or disobedient kings came to be boldly asserted and exercised through the council of ministers in which Brahmans generally held the highest position of authority. The domestic**

revolutions,"throttling in bed," usurpation, and other inexplicable calamities, which are a feature of the period of national kings may be, in most cases, traced to the working of the invisible hand of the Brahmans operating through the Brahman-dominated councils. Thus the power of the priestly class over the kings was almost unlimited and could be served to keep the kings within legitimate limits. [Swami:1946:96]

Brahmins ruled over masses also not only kings

Thus they ruled the masses directly as well as indirectly, as is mentioned:

"The authority of the Brahmans over the people was no less effectual. In the administration of the big cities as well as of the small villages throughout the country Bramhanical influence was supreme. [Swami:1946:96]

Free Lands and houses to Brahmins

"It was the practice of the King in early times to establishing every city, with gifts of free quarters and rent free lands, a body of learned Brahmans with a prescribed course of duties mainly religious. The Brahman assembly thus constituted had primarily to attend to the moral and spiritual welfare of the people" [Radhakumud Mukerji, *Local Government in Ancient India*, p.16, quoted by Swami:1946:96]

Secular powers were also exercised by Brahmins

"These assemblies exercised lay powers also, such as protection of grazing grounds, watercourses, looking after temples and places of public worship and the like. In the villages the Brahman Sabhas were the supreme governing body." [Swami:1946:96]

Brahman Sabhas had power over all castes

"The Sabha was the assembly of the Brahmans in which other castes had no place. as has been abundantly demonstrated by the evidence adduced, the sabha was the supreme governing body of the village, but the village was not of course, inhabited by the brahmans alone but by people of other castes as well." [Radhakumud Mukerji, *Local Government in Ancient India*, p.309, quoted by Swami:1956:97]

"From the royal court down to the small village, the Brahmanical power was a thing to be dreaded. It went still further and whenever they got an opportunity

they began to set up Brahman kings, and we find that such rulers were placed on the throne in Kashmir, Magadha, Assam and other places." [Swami:1946:97]

Dharma Sastras recasted in Muslim Rule

Dharma sastras are the basis on which the Brahmanic leaders control the populace, and give it a name like Hindu dharma. Though the name "Hindu" has no relevance for the period before Muslim arrival, now a days every body who is not a Muslim, Christian, Parsee is called as a Hindu, though from time to time, Sikhs, Buddhists, Jains and Lingayats call themselves non- Hindus. These books which actually control the masses were completely recast during muslim rule, as Swamiji observes:

"No less than sixteen writers have composed Dharma Sastras ... 'Some of them undoubtedly belong to the Puranic times or even earlier, but chapters have been interpolated in these works in recent times after the Muhammandan conquest.' (R. C. Dutt, *Later Hindu civilisation*, p.72) The Dharma Shastras of Yajnyavlkya, Vyasa and Parasara were undoubtedly produced or recast after the Muhammadans became masters, and the authors assumed the names of the famous Rishis of ancient days to give their works an appearance of antiquity." [Swami:1946:126]

Laws amended to establish Brahmin supremacy

The Dark age of India actually started after the death of Harshavardhana in seventh century and start of so called Rajput period. Swamiji observes:

"In the Dark Age between the eighth and the tenth centuries after Christ, when the Rajputs and the Brahmans were engaged in North India in stamping out Buddhism, by destroying all that was Buddhistic - buildings, books and even monks - the famous Brahman teacher Kumarila Bhatta was carrying on his campaign in favour of the Vedas and their sacrifces and in later centuries by many famous writers such as Padmagupta, Bhatta Narayana, Hayadeva, Madhava, Purnaprajnya of the Kanarese country, Sayanacharya of Vijyanagar and others. Under the rule of the Sultans and the Mughals when the only refuge of the Hindu masses was their gods and goddesses, Brahmanism found it easy to impose itself on the credulous and fear-stricken population. "It is indeed a remarkable fact, that under the adverse political conditions of the rule of the Sultans, Hindu society evolved new means of self-protection against alien influence by means of rigorous

domestic legislation as embodied in some of the most important Smriti compilations which were all produced during this period. Thus Madhavacharya, Visveswara Bhatta, Candeswara, Vacaspathi Misra, Prataparudra, Raghunandana and Kamalakara, all flourished during this period and fixed Hindu social and domestic manners and customs in different parts of the country by their writing. "... Under the Mughal monarchy, as a literary historian of India so aptly remarks, "Brahmanism remained with its undying vitality of intellectual life to continue its own course unmoved." (Radhakumud Mukharji, Local Government in ancient India, pp 15-16)

"The unfortunate truth, however, is that what was self- protection, nay self-glorification for Brahmans was damnation for the rest of the Hindus." [Swami:1946:127]

Means employed by Brahmins to enslave Hindus

Swamiji observes that Brahmanic hegmoney in all its heartlessness, and the cruel restrictions and worst superstitions came to be started from the time of the Rajputs and were legitimatised and perpetuated during several centuries of Muslim rule. To make it clear he enumerates some of the typical recommendations and commandment of the Shastras of this period. He observes:

(1) They insist on the observance of caste distinctions which are made more rigorous and oppressive than before,

(2) They prohibit inter-marriages, inter-dining and other kinds of social intercourse among the castes.

(3) They condemn as degraded caste persons those who follow numerous useful arts and crafts, such as goldsmiths, blacksmiths, washermen, weavers, carpenters, traders in various articles of daily need and so forth.

(4) They enforce the observance of various degrees of pollution and untouchability among the castes.

(5) Some communities are branded as impure and therefore to be shunned, as Mlechchas and Chandalas.

(6) Muhammandans, Christians, the Chinese and the Japanese, and other civilised peoples are treated insultingly as impure communities whose

contact will cause pollution.

(7) Not only punishment for offences, but also the reward of labour are to be regulated according to caste distinctions. "The wealth that is stolen by the Brahman tends to well being in the next life; the wealth that is given to the sudras tends to hell." (Sukraniti ii, 811-812)

(8) They prohibit sea-voyages which are to be punished with expulsion from caste or degrading penances.

(9) They encourage idolatry in all its debasing forms.

(10) Temples and their premises are glorified as spots of divine manifestation and visits to them are treated as a sure way to God's grace.

(11) Gods and goddesses are described in numerous fantastic forms with many heads and hands, in the shape of animals and semi-human beings, sleeping on snakes and riding on rats, possessing wives and children, some of whom sit on the heads of their lord, and doing things which decent men should shun - pictures which now furnish models for advertisements of beer and cigarettes and stories which disfigure the nation's life.

(12) They recommend self-immolation in fire or water for sinners. They sing false praises of Brahmans, of their sacred origin, of their exalted nature, of their extraordinary powers to bless and to curse, of the terrible effects of their wrath, of the great merit of making valuable gifts to them and of the necessity for all other men to do reverence and be submissive to them.

(13) There is no good result that cannot be achieved by making golden images of Ganesa, Vishnu, Asvins, Kubera, Indra, etc., and after worship, presenting them to Brahmans. "There is no sin, no incurable disease, no domestic calamity and no loss or injury to property which can cannot be washed away by such gifts." (R. C. Dutt, Early Hindu Civilization, p. 78)

(14) They recommend self-immolation of widows on the funeral pyre of their dead husbands, enforce child-marriage and prohibit re-marriage of widows." [Swami Dharmatirtha, p. 128 ff.]

Punishments and Ordeals on Caste

There are many who even today, think that ancient system of village panchayats was much better suited to Indian conditions than the Britisher's

system, specially misguided by Gandhi and Vinoba, this opinion grew. There are some who condemn the Indian Constitution solely because it, as they think rather mistakenly, was based on British system. It is a gross mistake to think so. As a matter of fact, the coming of the British and introduction of their laws was a major step in introduction of the "impartial justice by a third party" by the British, as the old system was prejudiced by caste bias and favourable to BKVs (Brahmin, Kshatriya, Vaishyas) rather than SCAs (Shudras, Chandals, Adivasis). Swami Dharma Teertha gives many examples of ordeals and punishments based on caste always favouring Brahmins, and severe and deadly for others, so does M.M. Dr. P. V. Kane. The main question is why did the masses accept these. Swamiji explains:

"To support and exemplify these and similar injunctions and superstitions were written the fanciful Puranas - indeed they are still being concocted as occasions arise to praise the sanctity of a temple or sacredness of a bath or a place of pilgrimage. **No story was considered too false, too obscene or too cruel to be propagated as a Purana or Mhatmya.**" [Swami:1946:131]

False philosophies created to support immoral acts

Swamiji explains how another powerful weapon in the armoury of the priests was philosophy. Before temples came into vogue, Brahmanism was opposed to the liberal teachings of the philosophers represented by the Upanishads and the Sankhya system. But with the rise of the new Hinduism(Brahminism), after the fall of Buddhism, the priestly class made the philosophy a very convenient and extremely useful tool by developing it as a fine art of dissimulation and in the process, the ancient sages were quoted to justify practice and rituals which were diametrically opposed to their doctrines. Image worship started by Buddhists came in handy for them as God was everywhere and could be worshipped in a multiple ways, as long as supremacy of the priestly caste was maintained. This was done by interpreting Caste distinctions as a divine law which no human being could dare to alter. He concludes by observing:

"... Every unmeaning ceremony was supported by some metaphysical theory. Animal sacrifices, drunken hysterics, and obscene festivities all had their place in spiritual culture because God could be approached in any way, according to the faith of the worshiper. **There is no vile practice, no injustice, no superstition, no cruelty, no immorality which could not be and has not been justified and advocated on philosophical grounds.**"

[Swami:1946:140]

Modern Brahmins distorted religion

" 'The priests of a religion who advise, encourage and permit crimes to be committed which they could prevent, take upon themselves the whole responsibility for the evil, and in this the modern Brahmans are so much the more to blame because they have done their best to distort and render unrecognisable the primitive religion of which they constituted themselves, the guardians and which however imperfect it may have been, was far from possessing the monstrous character which it acquired later in the hands of its avaricious and hypocritical interpreters. **The Hindu system of religion is nothing more than a lever of which the Brahmans make use habitually for influencing the passions of a credulous people and turning them to their own advantage.'** (Abbe Dubois, *"Hindu manners, Customs and Ceremonies"*, p. 613)" [Swami:1946:140]

Swamiji further exclaims:

"The caste, the temple and philosophy are the pillars which support the huge system of Brahman imperialism called Hinduism(Brahminism)." [Swami:1946:141]

Buddhism tried to save masses from Brahmanic slavery

Swami Dharmatirtha explains how the dark cloud of priestly supremacy ominously shaped itself during the age of the Vedas and gradually became prominent, until the brilliant kingdoms of the Gangetic Valley were caught in a treacherous whirlwind of Imperial Guptas and mysteriously doomed. Their doom was arrested for a long time by righteous might of Lord Buddha. There was a period of brightness of the national rejoicings of free India for over a thousand years. In those years, when the people had their great heroes and also the youthful enthusiasm for such things as exalted a nation, they made many a successful attempts to save themselves from the storm. Under self-respecting Indian monarchs in the country, the people fought for their free-born rights and to resist the aggressions of the priesthood, and the Indian Emperors held up the flag of Buddhism and kept Brahminism at bay. But when during Rajput period, the energies of the nation were cramped, when its moral courage, intellectual freedom and physical stamina were subdued by superstitious beliefs, and feeling of unity and solidarity were crushed under the unbearable weight of foreign subjection intensified by caste

degradation, then country was enveloped in an impenetrable gloom. Swamiji concludes:

"... An ancient and gifted people who resisted the march of Alexander, produced a Buddha and made India the greatest nation of the ancient world, yielded their necks to the yoke of Brahmanism." [Swami:1946:142]

Systematic Planning

It may not be considered that all this happened without planning. There were regular assemblies every six years in Kumbha and Ardha Kumbha Melas for major discisions. The system of Kumbha was a further expansion of the idea of Religious Assemblies started by Harshavardhana. Also there was a system of pilgrimage when contacts were maintained. There was a system of anual recitation of Sastras in most of important temples during yearly *mahotsvas*, where necessary editing could be done. And finally, the centres were established at various places, where advise and authorization of emergency nature could be obtained by the local priests in times of difficulty at any time throughout the year.

Vijaynagar Empire was a seat of exploitation of masses

A lot of praise is showered by brahmanic scholars over the glory of Brahmanism during Vijaynagara kings, to such an extent that only about six great things Brahmanism accomplished in 2500 years of history of India, one was this Empire as put forward by Sawarkar in his "*saha soneri pane*" i.e. "Six Golden Pages". In reality, it was reintroduction of Brahmanocracy and slavery of Hindus. Swamiji comments about it:

"The empire of Vijayanagar flourished between 1336 and 1565 and represented the grandest achievement of Brahmanism. The great Madhavacharya was probably its founder, his uterine brother Sayancharya was its greatest minister. Vijaynagar had its days of barbaric splendour, wealth and luxury reminding us of the declining glory of Rome, when Rajas and nobles kept many hundreds of women in their harems and many more to attend on them, when palaces were literally paved with gold and jewels, when temples and their priests revealed in the immensity of their ill-gotten wealth, in the dazzling magnificence of their festivals and the fleeting charms of dancing girls, and gorgeous monuments of architecture rose out of the sweat of slaves and prisoners of war. Otherwise, **the history of the 250 years of the ascendancy of Vijaynagar is a history of bloody wars**

without a moment of peace and security, of plots and counter-plots, of indulgence in wine and women, of Sati, slavery and forced labour, of 400 and 500 women being burried alive along with their husbands, of human sacrifices, such as that of sixty human victims offered to ensure the security of a dam near Hospet, of huge slaughter of animals for religious function and other frightful excesses of priestcraft. During a nine-day religious celebration the king accompanied by his Brahmins went where the idols were and every day watched the slaughter of animals. "Then he witnesses the slaughter of twenty-four buffaloes and a hundred and fifty sheep with which a sacrifice is made to the idol." (Sewel, *A forgotten Empire*) **The frequent wars and the distribution of booty among the Brahmins and temples remind us of those days of Asvamedha (horse-sacrifices) when the duty of the Kshatriya was to fight and amass wealth and share it with sacrificial priests.** In the revived Hinduism(Brahminism), we find all the unhealthy features of the religion of horse-sacrifices, with many more barbarous and debasing institution which deserved but on fate merciless extirpation. Such brutalities could be excused among the Muhammadan or the Portuguese bigots of those days. But in a land where the Buddha had preached and Ashoka had ruled, there was no excuse for the enlightened and sacredotal priestly class when they reared so monstrous a system of sin and exploitation." [Swami:1946:141]

Brahmanism was punished for the Vijayanagara crimes

Swamiji feels that the Muslim upsurge was to stop the "Brahmin Raj" crushing the masses, both Hindus and muslims, and he feels that it was the punishment of Brahmanic atrocities on masses, and justifies the Muslim reaction:

"Punishment came in a terrible form and with lightning speed. Wherever Hinduism(Brahminism) raised its head there the no less cruel hand of the Mohammedans inflicted condign punishment for its sins.

"First it occurred in the North, then in the middle and later on right down to the southernmost part of India, from one end of the country to the other, the avenging arm of Nemesis followed in the trial of Hindu revival, and except for short periods of interruption under the Mughals, India knew no security nor peace for many a long century.

"It was one protracted reign of terror and bloodshed. Idols were smashed to pieces, magnificent temples were desecrated or destroyed, the finest

monuments of art and architecture, palaces and towers, rich cities and flourishing were obliterated from the face of the earth and their enormous wealth of gold and silver and jewels was dragged out from their secret cells and carried to distant land. Many thousands of men and women and children, Brahmans and Mlechchas were enslaved and sold in foreign markets like sardines. Thousands of women from palaces and peasant homes, from temples and Brahman families, were made to enjoy the common sisterhood of the harems of Sultans and emperors. Many millions of Hindus were slaughtered, and many more forced to embrace Islam. Scenes of savage massacres, wholesale destruction and blood-curdling cruelties beggaring all description look place from end to end of the country.

"The unrelenting hand of Karma levied from the superstitious Hindus the toll of gold for gold, slave for slave, women for women, persecution for persecution, blood for blood, slaughter for slaughter, until Britain forced the Hindu and the Muslim to surrender their blood stained swords and live in peace.

"Seeing how even after nearly two centuries of British rule, the Hindu still takes pride in treating his brother Hindu as a despicable "untouchable," in fighting to preserve the abominable distinctions of caste, in passionately to dark idolatry, and other iniquities and superstitions, who can say that the punishment was unmerited or too severe?" [Swami: 1946: 145]

Indian BCs divided into catagories

It was Dr. Ambedkar who highlighted for the first time that the Indian society was the first in the world to create three catagories of backward castes, which together form more than a quarter of 1000 million strong population, (in addition to "Other Backward Castes - OBCs", who are 52%), viz. (1) Untouchables, unseeables and unapproachabes, (2) Adivasis or forst and hill dwellers who had to be in isolation and away from civilization, and (3) The criminal tribes, who had to refrain from doing any other work for their lively hood other than resorting to crime, and comented:

"... The Hindu does not regard the existance of these classes as a matter of apology or shame and feels no responsibility either to atone for it or to inquire into its origin and growth. ..." [Ambedkar, W&S,7,239]

B. G. Tilak thinks such criminal tribes existed at the time of Gita, and explained that the term *"Papyoni"* applied in statements in Gita (IX,32) that

Shudras, Vaishyas and other *"papayonis"* can obtain "*param gati*" if they pray me, refers to those people whom British Government designated as "Criminal Tribes". [Tilak:1968: 700]

Most of the scholars translate *"papyoni* as "born from the womb of sin". So how much credence should be placed on Mr. Tilak's statements, is a debatable point. If Tilak's interpetation is accepted, the time of Gita comes much later in middle ages after Harshavardhana. But the fact remains that the lowest srata of Hindu society was composed of these three types of people. To my mind it appears that the so called "criminal tribes" are nothing but the part of SCs and STs. This should be clear by writings of Annabhau Sathe, whose novel "Fakira" has become so famous. It is also well known that at the anual fair at Khandoba of Jejuri in Maharashtra, a god lower castes, even the robbers used to assemble to finalise their plans of action for the comming year. [Rajas:1997:74]

Dr. Ambedkar has very clearly established the origin of Untouchability being due to contempt of Buddhists. Those Buddhists who being "broken men" were living out side the villages, did not give up beef eating, unlike Brahmins, were condemned to be untouchables. His theory remains till date unchallenged. The "broken men", are defined as "strangers or fugitives from other territories, men in fact, who have broken the original tribal bond which gave them a place in the community and who had to obtain and thus get on as best as they might in a new tribe and new place. Broken men were thus created at times of the disordering of society." [Nair:1959:29]

Dr. Ambedkar himself wrote: The thesis on the origin of Untouchability advanced in the book is an altogether novel thesis. It comprises the following propositions:-

(1) There is no racial difference between the Hindus and the Untouchables;

(2) The distinction between the Hindus and Untouchability in its original form, before the advent of Untouchability, was the distinction between Tribesmen and Broken Men from alien Tribes. It is the Broken Men who subsequently came to be treated as Untouchables;

(3) Just as Untouchability has no racial basis so also has it no occupational basis;

(4) There are two roots from which Untouchability has sprung:

(a) Contempt and hatred of the Broken Men as of Buddhists by the Brahmins:

(b) Continuation of beef-eating by the Broken Men after it had been given up by others.

(5) In searching for the origin of Untouchability care must be taken to distinguish the Untouchables from the Impure. All orthodox Hindu writers have identified the Impure with the Untouchables. This is an error. Untouchables are distinct from the Impure.

(6) While the Impure as a class came into existence at the time of the Dharma Sutras the Untouchables came into being much later than 400 A.D.

These conclusions are the result of such historical research as he has been able to make, said Dr. Ambedkar ["Untouchables", W&S vol. 7, p.242]

Brahmanic views differ from Castemen's views

Deepankar Gupta observes that contrary to the Brahmanical view, each caste has its own theory of about its Origin. He talks of occupations but "without implying that such occupations are degrading in any manner". This unfortunately is not true. Recently, there was a hue and cry against word "Kunbi" given by a Brahmanic scholar in a Dictionary, and not long time back, Teli community agitated against some Brahmanic books including Manusmriti, and Government of Maharashtra had to declare a ban. But he is correct in occupational valuations, and in other aspects too, individual caste ideologies are markedly different from Brahmanical versions.

He illustrates this difference in Brahmanic version and their own versions by reproducing tales of origins of lowly Chamars, the even lower Chandals, and of the upper caste Kayasthas, as related by members of these castes, and notes how pervasive is the difference between Brahmanical view of these castes and the views these castes have of their own origins.

" *Case 1 -- The Chamars. The Orthodox view regarding the origin of Chamars is as follows:* "According to *Puranas*, the Chamars are descended from a boatman and Chandal woman; but if we were to identify them with Karavara, or leather worker, mentioned in the tenth Chapter of Manu, the father of the caste was a Nishada and mother a Vaideha (Risley 1891: Vol 1,175)"

"The Chamars view their origin as follows: "Chamars trace their pedigree to Ravi or Rui Das, the disciple of Ramananda at the end of fourteenth century. Another tradition current among them alleges that their original ancestor was the youngest of four Brahman brethren who went to bathe in a river and found a cow struggling in a quicksand. They sent the youngest brother in to rescue the animal, but he could get it out the cow died. He was compelled therefore by his brothers to remove the carcass, and after he had done this they turned him out of their caste and gave him the name of Chamar. (Ibid:176)"

"Case II -- The Chandals. The Orthodox view is the following: "Manu brands them as the lowest of mankind; sprung from illicit intercourse of a Sudra man with a Brahman woman, whose touch defiles the pure and who have no ancestral rites. (Ibid:184)

"The Chandals themselves, however, view their origin differently. Thus, according to a tradition of the Dacca Chandals, they were formerly Brahmanas, who became degraded by eating with Sudras. (Ibid.)

"Case III -- The Kayasthas. 'The Kayasthas themselves reject the theory which gives them for an ancestor Karan, the son of a Vaishya father by a Sudra mother'. (Ibid:438)

"But the Kayasthas of Bengal go 'so far as to argue that the five Kayasthas of the tradition were political officers in charge as Kshatriyas on a mission from Kanauj to the king of Bengal, and that the five Brahmanas played quite a subordinate part in the transaction, if indeed they were anything more than cooks of the five Kayasthas'. (Ibid:439)

"**These examples could indeed be multiplied ad nauseum, but they would all point to one single fact. The elaboration of the pure hierarchy from the Brahman's point of view is not shared by other castes.**" [Gupta:Indian Express:24.4.2000]

H. H. Riseley's view about Social Control by Brahmins

Much literature is available on the question of Scheduled Tribes. But the crucial point is that many individuals from some tribes were elevated to the ranks of Rajputs. But those who did not obey the dominance of Brahmins remained as such and are now known as "Adivasis". As Nair has pointed out, Brahmins elevated only a limited families to rank of Rajputs, so as not to let their ranks swell. Some glimpses of this proceedure come to light from the

writings of Riseley. His views are worth mentioning in toto, as they throw ample light on Indian scene as to what happened when the Buddhism died out and Brahmanism came up, after death of Harshavardhana. The process is still going on and still the struggle for supremacy has not ended. This is what Prof. Riseley coments:

"Brahmanism knows nothing of open proselytism or forcible conversion, and attains its end in a different and more subtle fashion, for which no precise analogue can be found in the physical world. It leaves existing aggregates very much as they were, and so far from welding them together, after the manner of Islam, into large cohesive aggregates, tends rather to create an indefinite number of fresh groups; but every tribe that passes within the charmed circle of Hinduism(Brahminism) is inclined sooner or later to abandon its more primitive usages or to clothe them in some Brahmanical disguise. The strata, indeed, remain, or are multiplied; their relative positions are on the whole unaltered; only their fossils are metamorphosed into more advanced forms.

"One by one the ancient totems drop off, or are converted by a variety of ingenious devices into respectable personages of the standard mythology; the fetish gets a new name, and is promoted to the Hindu Pantheon in the guise of a special incarnation of one of the greater gods; the tribal chief sets up a family priest, starts a more or less romantic family legend, in course of time blossoms forth as a new variety of Rajput. His people follow his lead, and make haste to sacrifice their women at the shrine of social distinction. Infant marriage with all its attendant horrors is introduced; widows are forbidden to marry again and divorce, which plays a great and, on the whole, a useful part in tribal society, is summarily abolished. Throughout all these changes, which strike deep into the domestic life of people, the fiction is maintained that no real change has taken place, and every one believes, or affects to believe, that things are with them as they have been since the begining of time. It is curious to observe that the operation of these tendencies has been quickened, and the sphere of their action enlarged by the great expansion of railways which has taken place in India during the last few years."

"The leading men of an aboriginal tribe, having somehow got on in the world and became independent landed proprietors manage to enroll themselves in one of the leading castes, They usually set up as Rajputs; their first step being to start a Brahman priest, who invents for them a mythical ancestor, supplies them with a family miracle connected with the locality where their

tribe are settled, and discovers that they belong to some hitherto unheard-of clan of the great Rajput community. In the early stages of their advancement they generally find great difficulty in getting their daughters married, as they will not marry within their own tribe, and Rajputs of their adopted caste will of course not intermarry with them. But after a generation or two their persistency obtains its reward, and they intermarry, if not with pure Rajputs, at least with a superior order of manufactured Rajputs, whose promotion into the Brahmanical system dates far enough back for the steps by which it was gained to have been forgotten. Thus a real change of blood takes place; while in any case the tribal name is completely lost, and with it all possibility of accurately separating this class of people from the Hindus of purpose bloods, and of assigning them to any particular non-Aryan tribe. They have absorbed in the fullest sense of the word, and henceforth pose, and are locally accepted, as high-caste Hindus. All stages of the process, family miracle and all can be illustrated by actual instances from the leading families in Chota Nagpur.

"A number of aborigines embrace the tenets of a Hindu religious sect, losing thereby their tribal name and becoming Vaishnabs, Ramayats, and the like. Whether there is any mixture of blood or not will depend upon local circumstances and the rules of the sect regarding inter- marriage. Anyhow the identity of the converts as aborigines is usually, though not invariably, lost, and this also may therefore be regarded as a case of true absorption."

"A whole tribe of aborigines, or a large section of a tribe, enroll themselves in the ranks of Hinduism(Brahminism) under the style of a new caste, which though claiming an origin of remote antiquity, is readily distinguishable by its name from any of the standard and recognized castes. Thus the great majority of Koch inhabitants of Rungpore now invariably describe themselves as Rajbanshis or Bhanga Kshatriyas - a designation which enable them to represent themselves as an outlying branch of the Kshatriyas who fled to North-Eastern Bengal in order to escape from the wrath of Parasu-Rama. They claim descent from Raja Dasarath, father of Rama. They keep Brahmans, imitate the Brahmanical ritual in their marriage ceremony, and have begun to adopt the Brahmanical system of gotras. In respect of this last point they are now in a curious state of transition, as they have all hit upon the same gotra (Kasyapa) and thus habitually transgress the primary rule of the Brahmanical system, which absolutely prohibits marriage within the gotra. But for this defect in their connubial arrangements - a defect which will probably be corrected in a generation or two as they and their purohits rise in intelligence - there would be nothing in their customs to distinguish them

from Aryan Hindus, although there has been no mixture of blood, and they remain thoroughly Koch under the name of Rajbanshi.

"A whole tribe of aborigines, or a section of a tribe, became gradually converted to Hinduism(Brahminism) without, like the Rajbanshis abandoning their tribal designation. This is what is happening among the Bhumij of Western Bengal. Here a pure Dravidian race have lost their original language, and now speak only Bengali; they worship Hindu gods in addition to their own (tendency being to relegate the tribal gods to the women), and the more advanced among them employ Brahmans as family priests. They still retain a set of totemistic exogamous subdivisions closely resembling those of the Mundas and the Santals, but they are beginning to forget the totems which the names of the subdivisions denote, and the names themselves will probably soon be abandoned in favour of more aristocratic designations. The tribe will then have become a caste, and will go on stripping itself of all customs likely to betray its true descent. The physical characteristics of its members will alone survive. After their transformation into a caste, the bhumiji will be more strictly endogamous than they were as a tribe, and even less likely to modify their physical type by intermarriage with other races."

"There is every reason to suppose that the movement of which certain phases are roughly sketched above, has been going on for many centuries, and that, although at the present day its working can probably be most readily observed in Chota Nagpore, the Orissa hills, and parts of Eastern and Northern Bengal, it must formerly have operated on a similar on a similar scale in Bengal proper and Behar."

"The tendency to imitate the usages of the higher castes which has been remarked in Behar and Chota Nagpur, operates much more strongly in Bengal proper and Orisa. In Orisa, for instance, Goalas take a higher position than in Behar, and rigorously prohibit widow remarriage. Throughout Bengal the Kaibarttas, though ranking below the Nabasakh or group of thirteen (formerly nine) castes from whose hands an orthodox Brahman can take water, marry their daughters as infants, and forbid their widows to remarry. In Dacca the gunny- weaving and mat-making Kapalis, and the Chandals, spoken of in Manu as 'the vilest of Mankind', have given up widow remarriage, and the practice appears to be confined to the Gareri, Rishi, Coch-Mandai, and other aboriginal and semi- aboriginal castes. Similar evidence of the gradual spread of practices Rajbanshis of Rungrpore, people of distinctly non- Aryan type, who have abandoned their tribal name of Koch

in recent times, now pose as high as high-caste Hindus, and affect great indignation if asked whether their widows can remarry. The Paliyas of Dinagepore, also demonstrably Koch, fall into two sections-Rajbansi Paliyas and Byabahari, or 'common' Paliyas. The latter practise widows remarriage, but are beginning to be ashamed of it, and in this and other matters show signs of a leaning towards orthodox usage. The former are as strict as the extreme ignorances of the 'fallen' Brahmans who act as their family priests admits; and as education spreads among them, they will go on continually raising their standard of ceremonial purity"

"It is clear that tendency of the lower strata of Hindu society is continually towards closer and closer conformity with the usages of the higher castes. These alone present a definite pattern which admits, up to a certain point, of ready imitation, and the whole Brahmanical system works in this direction." [H. H. Risley in the "Tribes and Castes of Bengal", 1891, quoted by Nair:1959:62]

It must be remembered that Riseley is mostly describing the area under the last Pala rulers, the greatest patrons of Buddhism, and population was Tribal as well as Buddhist. This process of conversion of Buddhists is a crucial one, mostly ignored by scholars. Some more details will be discussed in chapters on Adivasis and on Rajputs.

Dr. Ambedkar had warned that these people could be reclaimed by non-Hindus, and can swell the ranks of enemies of Hindus, a calamity for which the Hindus have to thank their own leaders. ["Anihilation of Caste", W&S vol 1, p.53] The Eastern India has seen some conversions to Christianity. The conditions of these tribal population, as described vividly in the "Naked Nagas" before conversion, make a sad reading.

Present situation

Even today many Dalit or bahujans are trying to show off as of higher castes by various methods like changing their names, accepting the gods and festivals of Hindus, and try to be more Hindus than Hindus themseles. But this did not dilute the caste discremination and humiliations. Then they realized that Sanskritization is no solution to Hindu barbarity. This is the reason why Ambedkar embraced Buddhism and Periyar promoted Dravida culture by attacking Hindu culture and Hindu Gods. [Kancha Ilaiah:1998:70]

Chapter 5

ADIVASIS WERE BUDDHIST NAAGAS

Various names of Scheduled Tribes (aadivaasi)

Various scholars have given different names to the population which is popularly called "aadivasis" in India. Nadgonde [p.1] has summerized these terms:

(1) "Aboriginal" or "Aborigines" by Riseley, Lassi, Elvin, Grigson, Shuburn, Talent, Martin and A. V. Thakkar (2) "Primitive Tribes" by Hutton (3) "So called aborigines" or "Backward Hindus" by Dr. G. S. Ghurye. (4) "Submerged humanity" by Dr. Das. (5) "Vanavasis" is a new name given to them by "Sangh Parivar", against which the tribal leaders are agitating as they feel it as insulting as "Harijan" to the dalits. (6) Some Adivasi leaders do not like the term "Adivasi" also, as they feel it originates from Brahmanic texts and has an effect like "Harijan" for untouchables. [L. K. Madavi, p. 10] (7) "Scheduled Tribe" is the term used in the Constitution, the reason as explained by Dr. B. R. Ambedkar, was:

"the word Adiwasi is really a general term, which has no specific legal dejure connotation, whereas the word 'Scheduled Tribes' has a fixed meaning, because it enumerates the tribes. In the event of the matter being taken to a court of Law, there should be a precise definition as to who these Adiwasis are. It was, therefore, decided to enumerate the Adiwasis under the term to be called "Scheduled Tribe" [Madavi: 1998:17]

Who should be called Aadivaasi Nadgonde gives the following as distinctive marks of tribal society as distinct from Hindu population: (1) Separate location (2) Small number (3) Common blood relationship (4) Absence of own dialect and own writing (5) Own life style (6) Simple Economics (7) Limited technology (8) Common religion and (9) Integrated social life

Differences between Castes and Tribes

1. Caste is based on birth, and there is no entry to caste without being born in it. Basis of tribe is not birth, but it is a group of people inhabiting in a particular area and are related by blood.

2. Caste is an endogamous group, but tribes do not oppose strongly the inter tribal marriages unlike caste. Inter dining also is allowed unlike caste.

3. Caste has obligations to follow hereditary traditional occupations, tribe does not.

4. Castes are spread on many areas but tribe stays at a place and has territorial integrity.

5. Castes have graded inequality in status, even subcastes have it, but not so in tribes.

Origins of various names

Various tribes have their own legends about their origin. One example is about origin of the word "Korku" - a legend says, once upon a time there ruled a king in Vidarbha at Nagpur, called Koram. Renouncing his home and kingdom, he went to forest with the intention of taking "sanyas". A young Kol damsel fell in love with him and prayed for his love. King accepted after due consideration. The progeny of this union was called "Korum" or "Korku". The area where they stay in large numbers is even now termed as Chota Nagpur. [Risley, "Tribe and Caste of Bengal, Appendix V., Chaure:1987:12]

Prehistoric Period It is held by scholars like Sankhalia, that the people of Neolithic age understood the use of fire, made pottery, cultivated grain and domesticated animals. The potters wheel and the art of spinning and weaving are also traced from the Neolithic period. [Mahajan:1972:28]

Some scholars believe that present day Adivasis are the survivals of the Neolithic Age, some of the Neolithic people were driven into hills and forests by later invaders and they are at present represented by the Gonds, Bhils, Santhals, etc. and a number of superstitious along with the worship of manes and spirits and Phallus images of stone and wood and the the use of amulets, beads, sacred threads, shells, stones, etc., for curing diseases and keeping away the evil spirits can be traced to the Neolithic period. [Mahajan:1972:28]

Adivasis are post Buddhistic

The idea that present day Adivasis are the "Original inhabitants" or *"Mul Nivasis"* and are remnants of the Neolithic Age is a popular theory of many activists. But it is far from the truth. Sociologists do not believe that the present S.T.s are that ancient, as mentioned by Nadgonde, who avers

that sociologists do not think them to be the most ancient society or the most original residents. [Nadgonde:1986:2]

At the time of rise of Buddhism, the society was so much intermixed that no trace of "pure" Aryans, or pure Dravidians for that matter, was left. Rhys Davids has observed:

"It is generally admitted that there are now no pure Aryans left in India. Had the actual custom been as strict as the brahmin theory this would not be so. ... in Northern India the ancient distinction, Aryan, Kolarian, and Dravidian, cannot, at the time of the rise of Buddhism, any longer be recognized. Long before the priestly theory of caste had been brought into any sort of working order, a fusion, sufficient at least to obliterate completely the old landmarks, was an accomplished fact; and the modern division (on caste), though race has also its share in them, use different names, and are based on different ideas. [Rhys Davids, "Buddhist India",p. 59]

Dr. Ambedkar also has expressed the similar opinion. It follows, therefore, that the creation of S.T.s is a post Buddhistic phenomenon, and the present day Adivasis are descendants of population, who were called Naagas and were Buddhist by faith, and after the fall of Buddhism were degraded to the present status by the ruling priestly class because Naagas had the enmity with the Aryans, did not worship Aryan Gods, did not perform yadnas but were devotees of Arhats, and chaiytas.

Indus Valley civilization was not of Aryans

The present Brahmanic scholarship is bent on proving that Aryans are the original residents of India and that there was no "Aryan Invasion". They try to prove that Aryans were a civilized people and were the builders and not the destroyers of Harrapan Civilization. What is the reason, that they wish to somehow prove this? To us, it appears that, since Mahatma Jotirao Phule criticized the "Arya Bhats" for the atrocious behaviours of these people towards "shudras and ati-shudras", in this "Land of Bali" - Bali Sthan -, and organized the masses against the Aryabhats, the latter felt that they will loose the supremacy, which they had achieved and very jealously guarded. So it became eminent for them, they prove that they are not aliens, they belong to the soil, and that Aryan Invasion is just a myth. Voluminous literature is being created by them and every method is being used to promote through the media, print as well as electronic, to put forward their view. Not withstanding all this, it was the Naagas who

were the original residents of this land and Aryans were the invaders. That is the verdict of the history.

India was land of Naagas and its language Tamil

Who were the people inhabiting India during the Indus Valley Civilization? The modern scholars like Karan Singh and Dasaku Ikeda think that the Dravidians are the descendants of people from Harrapan Civilization. In his opinion, "...the creators of the Indus civilization were the forefathers of the Dravidians, who today mainly inhabit southern India." [Karan Sing and Daisaku Ikeda:1988:2]

Like many others like Gail Olmvet, Datta Ray Chaudhari and Majumdar also opine that, the main basis of Indian social cultural system is presumed to be Vedic Culture. This presumption is baseless, and unacceptable. There is no doubt that, the Indus valley culture played a great role in the development and preservation of Indian culture. [Kosare:1989:263]

Dr. Ambedkar's views

That these people were the Naagas is clear from the account by Dr. Ambedkar, who observes that the students of ancient Indian History often come across four names, the Aryans, Dravidians, Dasas and Naagas. The Aryans were not a single homogeneous people, being divided into at least two sections. A greater mistake lies, he says, in differentiation of the Dasas from the Naagas. Dasas are the same as Naagas, Dasas being another name for Naagas. Dasa is the sanskritised from of the Indo Iranian word Dahaka, which was the name of the king of the Naagas. The following points emerge from his writings:

1. Undoubtedly the Naagas were non-Aryans. A careful study of Vedic literature reveals a spirit of conflict, of a dualism, and a race superiority between two distinct types of culture and thought. The mention of the Naagas in the Rig Veda shows that the Naagas were a very ancient people.

2. It must also be remembered that the Naagas were in no way aboriginal or uncivilized people. History shows a very close association by intermarriage between the Naaga people with the Royal families of India. Not only did the Naaga people occupy a high cultural level but history shows that they ruled a good part of India.

3. That Andhradesa and its neighbourhood were under the Naagas during early centuries of Christian era is suggested by evidence from more sources that one. The Satvahanas, and their Successors, the Chutu Kulu Satkarnis drew their blood more or less from the Naaga stock.

4. Contrary to the popular view is that Dravidians and Naagas are the names of two different races, the fact is that the term Dravidians and the Naagas are merely two different names for the same people.

5. The word 'Dravida' is the Sanskritised form of the word Tamil. The original word Tamil when imported into Sanskrit became Damila and later on Damila became Dravida. The word Dravida is the name of the language of the people and does not denote the race of the people.

6. The thing to remember is that Tamil or Dravida was not merely the language of South India but before the Aryans came it was the language of the whole of India, and was spoken from Kashmere to Cape Camorin. In fact it was the language of the Naagas throughout India. ["The Untouchables", pp. 56, 58, 59, 63, 66, 75]

Vratyas were Naagas

Before seventh century B.C., i.e. before the rise of the Buddha, all the ksatriya dynasties of Mahabharata times had been ruined, shattered and destroyed. They were replaced on one side by the Dravidas - Naagas in Taxilla, Patalpuri, Udyanpuri, Padmawati, Bhogpuri, Nagpur, Anga or Champa, and in various places in the south; and on the other side by ganas or republics of vratyas like Licchavis, Mallas, Moriyas etc. [Jyoti Prasad Jain, quoted by Kosare:1989:42]

Brahmanic literature calls the various clans like Lichavis, Mallas, Moriyas, etc. as "Vratyas". The Shishunakas are called as "Ksatra-bandhus" and not as Ksatriyas. According to Prof. Jaychandra Vidyalankar, this term is used to describe the ignoble origin of these people. They were the warriors among the vratyas, and the vratyas were those people who inhabitated the east and north-west of madhya-desha. They were not followers of Vedic brahmin culture. Their cultural language and day to day language in use was Prakrit. They did not respect the brahmins, instead they respected the arhants and worshipped the chaityas. [Kosare: 1989: 42]

He further avers that there was no pure progeny of Aryans alone. Because of inter marriages, cultural interchanges and religious conversions, a new class of Indian people was emerging, which comprised in majority of followers of shramanic Naagas or Dravidas or Vratyas as they were called by the followers of chaturvarnya. There used to be inter marriages among the Aryans and Dravidas, and the ethnic differences were getting eliminated. All those who followed the profession of ksatriyas, may they be descendants of Vedic Aryans, or Manav-vamshi Aryans, or Vratyas, or Naagas or Vidyadharas or Dravidas, they all called themselves as Ksatriyas, and were having marriage relationship among themselves very freely. [Kosare:1989:42]

Sisunaaga Dynasty

The name of Sisunaaga is applied to first king of dynasty by the Brahmins, but Buddhist tradition, as seen in Mahawanso, applies it to tenth and narrates a legend, that he was a son of a courtesan from a Licchavi king, was thrown on a dung heap as an abortion, a certain Naaga Raja revived and protected the male child, who ascended the throne of Magadha. [Fergusson: 1971: 63]

Second Buddhist convocation was held hundred years after the Buddha, during reign of King Kalashoka. He and his successors, including nine Nandas, till Chandragupta Maurya came on throne, were all Naagas, and were considered of very low caste and hated by Brahmins. Maha Padma and Nanda, the only two of their names, certainly known to us, are both names of serpents and their coins depict the serpent as principle symbol. [Fergusson:1971:64]

After the Shishu-Naagas, the Nandas ruled Magadha. Their founder was called by many names, including "vratya-nandi Shishu Naaga", the term according to K. P. Jayswal denotes of their being the vratyas, which meant that the Nandas like their predecessors, Shishu Naagas, were also from the Naaga descent. [Kosare:1989:43]

Naaga worship is non-Vedic

Fergusson explains, though the serpent worship is found as traces in various places, it is "diametrically opposed to the spirit of Vedas or of the Bible", and it is prevalent among the Turanian races and essentially only among them only. By Turanian he means Dravidians, in Indian context. [Fergusson:1971:3] Like Vedas, Zend Avesta also records the religious

beliefs of Aryans, and they "are not, and never were, serpent worshipers anywhere" and that "serpent worship is essentially that of Turanian, or at least of non-Aryan people." [Fergusson:1971:40]

Naagas were Buddhists

That the Naagas were sympathizers and followers of Buddha is well known. Dr. Ambedkar in 1956. while converting half a million of his followers to Buddhism at Nagpur, had remarked that his selection of Nagpur, was due to the historical association of the area with the Naagas, who were friendly towards Buddhism. His opinion that we all are the descendants of a Naaga Takshaka saved by Rishi Astika from the genocide of Naggas, in the "Sarpa yadnya", performed by Janmejaya, the great grand son of Pandavas, is also well known. We might also quote a Buddhist tradition from Mahavatthu:

"Naagas are generally devoted to the Buddha. The enthusiastic devotion that our compilers believed Naagas to possess towards the Teacher and the Teaching finds expression in the popular episode of Muchalinda's extraordinary way of protecting the Exalted One during the seven days of untimely rain. They were also among the beings who formed a body of guards protecting the Bodhisattva and his mother. At the Bodhisatva's birth some Naagas came to bathe him, a scene that had long been a favourite among sculptors. On the magnificent demonstration of bearing parasols. From other sources we learn how they happened to obtain relics of the Buddha, which they jealously guarded for a long time." [Bhikku Telwatte Rahula: 1978:172, K. Jamanadas:1991:108]

While describing the birth of Bodhisatta, Paul Carus mentions about Naaga kings:

"The Naaga kings, earnestly desiring to show their reverence for the most excellent law, as they had paid honour to former Buddhas, now went to greet the Bodhisatta. They scattered before him mandaara flowers, rejoicing with heartfelt joy to pay their religious homage." [Paul Carus, p. 11]

That "Naaga" was an honorable appellation used in ancient Indian society is clear from the description of the rite of initiation of Buddhist Bhikku. Dharmanand Kosambi mentions that the shramner desiring upasampada was being addressed as "Oh, Naaga". [p. 57]

Diggha Nikaya has two poems, which describe "how all the gods of the people come to pay reverence, at Kapilvastu, to the new teacher", as Rhys Davids observes, among whom were four kings, which included the King of Naagas. While explaining the relationship between worship of Naaga, tree and river, Rhys Davids observes:

"Then come the Naagas, the Siren serpents, whose worship has been so important a factor in the folklore, superstition, and poetry of India from the earliest times down to-day. Cobras in their ordinary shape, they lived, like mermen and mermaids, more beneath the water, in great luxury and wealth, more especially of germ, and sometimes, as we shall see, the name is used of the Dryads, the tree- spirits, equally wealthy and powerful. They could at will and often did, adopt the human form and though terrible if angered, were kindly and mild by nature. Not mentioned either in the Veda or in the pre-Buddhistic Upanishads, the myth seems to be a strange jumble of beliefs, not altogether pleasant, about a strangely gifted race of actual men; combined with notions derived from previously existing theories of tree worship, and serpent worship, and river worship. But the history of the idea has still to be written. These Naagas are represented on the ancient bas- reliefs as men or women either with cobra's hoods rising from behind their heads or with serpentine forms from the waist downwards." [Rhys Davids, "Buddhist India", p. 223]

Though "scarcely noticed in the Vedas", as Rhys Davids mentions, the Tree worship formed an important part of the beliefs of peoples of Northern India at the time of the rise of Buddhism, and the tree deities were called Naagas. As to why tree gods are not mentioned separately, in Diggha Nikaya, Rhys Davids observes:

"... The tree-deities were called Naagas, and were able at will, like the Naagas, to assume the human form and in one story **the spirit of a Bunyan tree who reduced the merchants to ashes is called a Naaga-raja, the tree itself is the dwelling place of Naaga. This may explain why it is that the tree-gods are not specially and separately mentioned in the Maha Samaya list** of deities who are there said by the poet to have come to pay reverence to the Buddha. ..." [Rhys Davids, "Buddhist India", p. 232]

Rajwade's Opinion

About the existence of the Naagas in this country, shri V. K. Rajwade mentions that 'Rajtarangini' describes in detail about the Naaga kingdoms

in Kashmir in olden days. Astik parva of Mahabharat is related to Naagas from beginning to end. It mentions the inhabitation of Naagas in the Khandava-prastha and Khandav vana situated to the south of Yamuna river. Harivamsha mentions the of Naagas residence to be in Nagpur. Therefore, there is no doubt that in olden days, during the Pandava times and there after, there were Naagas residing on a vast territory of India. It can definitely be stated on the basis of description of 'sarpa satra', that there was a fierce war between the Naagas and Manavas for some time. Arjuna married a Naaga princess Ulupi. From this it can be inferred that some Naagas were friendly towards the Manavas. [Kosare:1989:270]

Views of T.A Gopinath Rao

While discussing hindu iconography he has agreed that majority of Buddhists were Naagas, as he said, quite a long time back, that many regions of India, in historical times, were inhabitated by the Naagas and they are said to have formed the majority of persons who joined the newly started Buddhistic religion. [p.554] He further states:

"Some scholars of Malabar are inclined to believe that the modern Nayars (Sudras) of Malabar might be descendants of early Naagas as name within modern times might have been corrupted into Nayars. The hypothesis is more fictitious and fanciful than real and tenable." [Gopinath Rao:II,2:554]

Prof. Rao, who categorically mentions Nayars were sudras, finds the theory that they were Buddhists, untenable. It is difficult to understand what faults Prof. Rao found with the theory. At least, we do not find any particular reason to disbelieve this theory. One thing is certain that the Nayars were the original inhabitants of the region, they did not come from outside. Before the Brahmins came from the North and establish 'sambamdhams' with the female folks of Kerala, and thus dominated over the Nayar community, the original inhabitants were the Naagas only. From 'Naaga' they could have become 'Nayar'. What is so peculiar in this, that Prof. Rao finds, is hard to understand.

Let it be as it may, the fact remains that the Naagas became Buddhist in great numbers, is a fact that is certain, as admitted by him. Today's Indian society is made up of and is developed from the erstwhile aboriginal tribal people, is a fact recognized by all the scholars. Then what is the difficulty in accepting that the word 'Nayar' could have come from 'Naaga'?

The relations of Nayars with low caste Pullayas, who were undoubtably Buddhists originally, can also be judged by a well known, and now banned by British, custom of so called "Pullaya scare", where a Nayar woman had to go with a Pullaya man, if touched by him outside the house while alone, during one month in a year after Makar Sankrati. This custom is recorded by Barbodosa, a Portugese traveller comming to India.

There was a casteless society among the Naaga culture

The non-aryan Naaga people were believers in Buddhistic social culture. During their rule, there was a society based on social equality in India, because their cultural values were influenced by the Buddhist traditions. This social system of Naagas, even in those early days, is noteworthy in contrast to Brahmanical social system of inequality. It is unfortunate that the modern high caste scholars, while narrating the greatness of ancient Indian culture, ignore this fact. Shri H. L. Kosare opines:

"As all the elements in the Naagas society were treated with equal status, casteless social order was the main basis of social system of Naagas. As the Naaga culture was based on Buddha's principles of equality, it received the status of Buddha's religion. Thus, Naaga culture played the greatest role in the process of establishing a casteless egalitarian and integrated society in Indian cultural life." [Kosare: 1989: 256]

"Basham has shown that there is no mention of caste anywhere in ancient Tamil literature. But after Aryan influence increased, and political and social system became more complex, caste system which was somewhat more severe than in north, evolved even here. The period of Sangam literature is third century A.D., This shows that during the Satavahana rule there was no caste system." [Kosare:1989:251]

Naagas had their Republics

Not only their social system was public oriented, but unlike the brahmanical system, their political system also was designed to give social justice to all sections of people. It is well known that during pre-Gupta era, from first to the beginning of fourth century A.D., the central countries in India comprised of strong Republics of Naagas. Samudragupta destroyed these republics. About the system of administration of Bharshiv Naagas, Dr. K. P. Jaiswal has observed that their social system was based on the principles of equality. There was no

place for any caste system in them. They all belonged to one and the same caste." [Kosare: 1989: 251]

There were independent kingdoms of Naagas in South India also. These kingdoms came together and formed a federal republic. This federal republic of Naagas was termed as Fanimandal or Naagamandal. This Cheromandal republic of Naagas of South India was very powerful and indivisible at the time of Periplus, i.e. in 80 A.D. Later during Ptolemy's times, i.e. 150 A.D., north eastern part of Tondemandalam became separate. (J.P.Jain, 'bharatiya itihas', p. 239). This Cheromandal or Fanimandal was a federation of separate kingdoms of Naagas coming together to form a united national federation. In reality, it was a united Naaga Nation of South India. [Kosare:1989:179]

Naagas in Mahabharata

It is an accepted fact, that Mahabharata had minimum three revisions as per brahmanic scholars, along with Gita in it. As a matter of fact, scholars like Khare, an ardent student of Gita from Pune, has differentiated the verses of each of three authors, in his book. Western scholars like Kaegi believe that the epics continued to be interpolated upto 13th century and even to the beginning of current century.

Therefore, it is no wonder that Rhys Davids finds it difficult to assign particular verses to Mahabharata depicting state of affairs in seventh century B.C. at the time of rise of Buddha. [Rhys Davids, p. 214] He feels the changes made by priests were "because the priests found that ideas not current in their schools had so much weight with the people that they (the priests) could not longer afford to neglect them." The objects of priests in doing so were:

"...in the first place to insist on the supremacy of the brahmins, which had been so much endangered by the great popularity of the anti-priestly views of the Buddhists and others; and in the second place to show that the brahmins were in sympathy with, and had formally adopted, certain popular cults and beliefs highly esteemed by the people. In any case, there, in the poem, these cults and beliefs, absent from the Vedic literature, are found in full life and power. ..." [Rhys Davids, "Buddhist India", p. 214]

Mahabharata is a story of feud between Kurus and Pandus, and Pandus are unknown to early literature, either Brahamanas or Sutras.

Mahabharata was originally a story of war between Kurus and Panchalas. But Mahabharata without Pandus is 'like an Iliad without Achilles and Agamemnon'. In the epic, Panchalas are allies of Pandus. Pandus are for the first time mentioned by Katyayana (c.180 B.C.). Pandus first come to view in later Buddhist literature, as a mountain clan. Epic Pandus is not a people but a family. [Cambridge hist. of India, p.226] But who were Panchalas? Presumably, they were Aryans and the epic represents the 'fight between Aryans after the original inhabitants were overthrown and Brahmanised'. But the author says this is doubtful, and speculates:

"It is possible that the Panchalas represent five Naaga clans (with ala 'a water snake' cf. Eng. eel) connected with the Kurus or Krivis (meaning 'serpent' or 'Naaga'), and that none of the families is of pure Aryan blood, for the Naagas in the epic are closely related to Pandus ..." [Ibid., p. 227]

Mahabharata opens with a curse on Naagas

Fergusson avers that, to start with, this epic poem opens, with a curse on the serpents. Poet uses the words so cleverly that, if carelessly read, the curse could appear to be on reptiles and not on human worshipers. But in reality it is a curse on the Naaga people. In Adi parva the word used is "Naaga" and in Vana parva, where Bhima gets in trouble with Nahusha in the form of a real serpent, it is "sarpa". [Fergusson:1971:47]

"the story of great sacrifice for the destruction of the serpents is so mixed up with historical and human action that it is evident at once that the ambiguity about the name is only seized upon by the Hindu poets as an excuse for introducing the super natural into an ordinary human transaction, ..." [Fergusson: 1971:47]

Immediately after the introductory passages, the story Naaga races starts with two sisters Kadru and Vinata marrying Rishi Kashyapa. Kadru, the eldest, becomes mother of 1,000 Naagas, from whom originates the whole Naaga race. Important among the names of her decedents are Sesha, Vasuki, Airavata, Takshaka, Karkotaka, Kaaliya, Aila or Elaapatra, Nila, Anila, Nahusha and others. The younger sisters gives birth to garuda, who becomes a powerful enemy of Garuda race. "When divested of all poetical garb and mythological rubbish", the heroes Mahabharata, "Lunar race" are of second horde of Aryan race comming to India, comming about 1000 years after purer "Solar race", their original seat traced near north of Peshawar, however, has shown all of Buddhistic sculptures of Bactrian influence. [Fergusson:1971:59]

They passed through Punjab and settled at Hastinapura. In the first transaction with Naagas, they burn the forest Khandava, for making place for a second capital and dislodge the Naagas there. The Naagas were protected by a Buddhist deity Indra. But attacked by Vedic god Agni, the brahmin poet depicts that all Naagas perished except their king Takshaka. [Fergusson: 1971: 60]

The relations with the Pandus and Naagas were most friendly as seen by Arjuna, marrying first Ulupi, the daughter of a Naaga king at the foot of Himalayas, near Hurdwar, and marrying Chitrangada, daughter of Chitravahana, the Naaga king of Manipur. By her, he had a son, Bhabra-vahana, who played a strange part subsequently, during Arjuna's Ashwamedha. From these and other minor particulars, Fergusson feels, "the author of Mahabharata wished to represent the Aryans of that day as cultivating friendly relations with the aborigines." [Fergusson: 1971: 60]

The quarrel between Aryans and Naagas started when Parikshit insulted a hermit by hanging a dead snake around his neck. Hermit's son invoked Takshaka, who is represented as king of Takshashila. Takshaka bit the king to death to avenge the insult. Janmejaya started the great sacrifice for destruction of the Naagas to avenge the assassination of his father. Thousands - myriads - had already perished when slaughter was stayed at the intervention of Astika, a Brahmin, though nephew of Vasuki, a Naaga king of east. Probably, the remnants got converted or promised submission to Aryans and for next 3 or 4 centuries, we hear nothing about Naagas until 691 B.C., when we find Naaga dynasty on the throne of Magadha, and in reign of sixth king Ajatshatru, the Buddha was born in 623 B.C., and "regeneration of the subject races was inaugurated." [Fergusson: 1971: 60] About Manipur, he feels it curious to observe that in Manipur, the scene of Arjuna's marriage with Chitragandha, and his slaughter by her son, that at present day, the peculiar God of Royal family is a species of snake called Pa-kung-ba, from which family claims decent. [Fergusson: 1971: 61] In the immediate neighborhood of Manipur, there are numerous tribes of aboriginal people still called Naagas, though they are not serpent worshipers. [Fergusson: 1971: 61] **The site of the Naaga sacrifice of Janmejaya is said to be Kurukshetra, but it is more probable that the site is in Orrisa, at Agrahaut. Here the tradition of Mahabharata is preserved by images of kings, who could not be present on the occasion. And the serpent worship is still prevalent in the region.**[Fergusson: 1971: 61]

Naaga Rajas in Kashmir

Fergusson believes, "Kashmir has always been considered, in historical times, as one of the principle centres of serpent worship in India", and whatever knowledge of Naagas has been gathered is from its legends. Though Naaga worship prevailed from ancient past, it is certainly seen from a century before Christ, when king Damodara, as per Raj Tarangani, was converted into a snake because he offended some brahmin. He was succeeded by three tartar princes who were Buddhists as confirmed by their coins. His successor was Abhimanyu, who appears to be against the Buddhists. His successor Gonerda III, restored the Naaga worship. Many more Naaga kings are mentioned. [Fergusson: 1971: 45]

When Huen Tsang entered the valley in 632 A.D. during the reign of Baladitya, Buddhism was flourishing, though the King was against Buddhism. He repeats the usual story of valley being a lake in the past, but adds that fifty years after the Nirvana of the Buddha, a disciple of Ananda, converted the Naaga Raja, who quitted the tank, built 500 monasteries, and invited bhikkus to dwell in them. [Fergusson: 1971: 46]

It is not only in the valley of Kashmir, but from Kabul to Kashmir, Huen Tsang finds Dragon Kings or Naaga Rajas playing important role in the history of land. All this shows how north west India, in seventh century, was Naaga worshiper and became Buddhist. [Fergusson:1971:46]

Huen Tsang further mentions a legend of a king of Sakya kula, during his travels through the land, fell in love with and married a Naaga princess, who was cured of blindness by the Buddha Himself; and her son was among those who were present during the distribution of relics of Buddha on His nirvana. [Fergusson: 1971: 46]

Another legend is of a Bhikku becoming a serpent because he killed the tree Elaapatra and resided in a beautiful lake or spring near Taxila. People could go there along with a sramana, during Huen Tsang's times, and their wishes of good rain or weather were fulfilled by prayer of the Naaga. General Cunningham visited the spring in 1863, and found it still reverenced. [Fergusson: 1971: 46]

A story in 'Mahavamso', confirms the presence of Naaga Kings two centuries before Huen Tsang. A bhikku, named Majjhantiko, was sent to Kashmir and Gandhara by Ashoka after third Sangiti in 253 B.C. Aravaalo, the Naaga king ruling there, tried to terrify the bhikku, but was

ultimately converted to Buddhism. Similarly in Himavanta, 84,000 Naagas were converted, and all his subjects were bowing down to the Thero. [Fergusson:1971:47]

Ambassadors of Alexander, returning after a visit to Kashmir, mentioned that the King there cherished two large serpents. The King of Taxilla also showed to Alexander a huge serpent being worshipped, according to Strabo. [Fergusson:1971:47]

The Naaga and Buddhist influence persisted till Moghul times as Abdul Fazal tells us in "Ayeene Akbari", that during reign of Akbar (1556-1605), there were temples in Kashmir, 45 of Shiva, 65 of Vishnu, 3 of Brahma, 22 of Durga, but 700 of the Naagas, in active worship. All this is confirmed by the architecture of the valley. [Fergusson: 1971: 47]

Rise of Buddhism

A large section of Indian population is of Turanian race, which fell prey to hordes coming from west for centuries. The incoming Aryans intermixed with aboriginal races, became weak and were subdued by next hordes coming in. Less pure "Lunar race" came about 13th or 14th century B.C. For next thousand years, no other horde came here, due to powerful kingdoms in Assyria and Persia. As the blood of Aryans had become impure, Veda had lost its rule of faith. Under these circumstances, Sakyamuni tried to "revive the religion of aboriginal Turanians" and his call was responded to by not only Turanians in India, but by "all the Turanian families of mankind." [Fergusson: 1971: 62]

On Puranic evidence, Fergusson, rather unjustifiably feels, the Buddha himself was Aryan. Though Buddhist tradition takes his son Rahula as a bhikku, Vishnu Purana records his succession to throne of his grand father. He says: "the dissemination of Buddhist religion is wholly due to the accident of its having been adopted by the low caste kings of Magadha, and to its having been elevated by one of them to the rank of the religion of the state." [Fergusson: 1971: 62] As a matter of fact, the Buddha was a Naaga, and even by Brahmins, he is described as Vratya Kshatriya. Fergusson feels that as the reforms introduced by the Buddha, ancestral worship was abolished and worship of relics of saints started, serpent worship was repressed and "its sister faith" the tree worship, was elevated to first rank. [Fergusson: 1971: 63]

Ahimsa of Buddha

Ferguson avers that the Buddha promoted asceticism, denounced the sensual enjoyment and preached nonviolence, and observes:

"No war was ever waged by Buddhists, ... No faith was ever so essentially propagated by persuation as that of Buddha, and though the Buddhists were too frequently persecuted even to destruction, there is no instance on record of any attempt to spread their faith by force in any quarter of globe." [Fergusson: 1971: 63]

Serpent worship during Mauryan Dynasty

Ashokan edicts do not show worship of Buddha, or tree or Serpent, but Mahinda takes branch of Bo tree to Ceylon and in caves in Orissa we see both tree and serpent worship prevalent during the period. [Fergusson: 1971: 64]

Time of Naagaarjuna and Kanishka

Naagaarjuna was the ruling spirit behind the Buddhist Council held under Kanishaka. Roman coins dated 73 to 33 B.C. are found in a stupa by Kanishka at Manikyaal. The Name Naalandaa originates from a Naaga called Naalandaa, who resided in a pool nearby. Naagaarjuna was monk at Naalandaa monastery. According to him,

"the words uttered by the Sakya Muni during his life time, had been heard and noted down by the Naagas, and have kept them to themselves in their own abode, till such time as mankind would become worthy to receive them. Naagaarjuna gave out that he had received these documents from the Naagas and was commissioned to proclaim them to the world. ..." [Fergusson: 1971: 65]

Buddhist Sculptures

The literary evidence is only available from Lalita-vistara of Tibet onwards, and such later books from Ceylon etc., it is hoped that original sutras would be available in future. Our only means to reconstruct the history is from archeological finds from Ashoka edicts, Sanchi, Amravati, Ajintha, Mahabalipuram, and other caves in ghats. [Fergusson: 1971: 67]

Ashoka's inscriptions present the picture of early Buddhism, entirely different and in a wonderful contrast with Buddhism of *Lalitvistara.*[Fergusson: 1971: 67]

Gateways of Sanchi are of times of Naagarjuna, in first half of first century. "Buddha never appears in them as an object of worship. The Dagoba, the Chakra or wheel, the tree and other such emblems are reverenced. Serpent does appear but rarely." [Fergusson: 1971: 67]

At Amravati, three centuries later, Buddha is worshipped, but Naaga is his coequal, more in accordance with modern notions. Dagoba, Tree, Chakra are all worshipped. Thus Sanchi gives picture of Hinayana and Amaravati that of Mahayana, before coming of Fa Hian. [Fergusson: 1971: 67]

Ajanta depicts picture just before its decline, three centuries later than Amravati. There is no serpent worship in paintings, but Naaga representations are found as sculptured decorations on the doorways or in detached bas-reliefs in the caves. [Fergusson: 1971: 67]

At **Mahabalipuram**, is the most important bas-relief described by Fergusson, which today's brahmanic scholars like to describe as a scene of "Descent of river Ganges". He mentions it as **"great Naaga sculpture belonging to the classical stage of Indian Art".** He describes the sculpture in minute details, and laments that the top portion is broken away, In 1827, only the lower part of Naaga was remaining, but his wife below him was quite intact. **It has a form of Naaga different from those at Sanchi, Amravati and Ajanta, but the grouping of the figures around Naaga is so similar to the oldest one in Sanchi, as if so many centuries made no difference in style, and this is last of Takshaka sculptures.** [Fergusson: 1971: 68]

Ayrans created writings, Turanians created structures

Fergusson believes, Turanians were builders, the stone architecture starting from Ashoka. The point that Turanian, i.e. Dravidian culture had also created great Buddhistic literature, and has been destroyed by Brahmanic / Aryan / Sanskritic vandalism, has not been taken into account by him, it seems. He mentions:

"... It (Buddhism) was not a reform of Vedic religion of Aryans, but simply that when they had lost their purity, Sakya Muni called on the subject races to rise, and moulded their feelings and their superstitions into that form of faith we now know as Buddhism. It was when these Turanians first came into power that permanent architecture was thought of in India, and as they grew in strength, and their influence extended, so did their

architecture acquire consistency, and spread over the length and breadth over the land. They had no literature, or next to none; at least we have not yet found one Buddhist book that was reduced to its present shape till nearly 1000 years after the death of the founder of the religion. ... Stated in its broadest terms, the distinction is this, - all the literature of India is Aryan, all the architecture is Turanian; and the latter did not come into existence till the former race had lost their purity and power, or, in other words, till the Turanian religion, known as Buddhism, rose to surface, and its followers usurped the place hereto occupied by the Aryans and their Vedas." [Fergusson: 1971:78]

Tribal Population in Sanchi and Amaravati Stupas

By careful study of human figures both of men and women, which Fergusson has described in minute details, he identified two distinct races to be present there.

One is described as civilized, and worshiping the Buddhist emblems like Chakra, Stupa and tree. He is actually referring to Buddhist upasakas, i.e. house holders, though he calls them as "Hindoos", not in modern sense as of brahmanic faith, as word "hindoo" has no relevance for a period before the arrival of Muslims. As against this there is another race, referred by Fergusson as "Dasyus", for want of any suitable name, which is of Aboriginal Tribal culture, mostly worshiping Naaga emblems. These were labeled as "ascetics or priests" by General Cunningham and Colonel Massey, because their costumes resembled Buddhist ascetics in Burma and other Buddhist countries. But Fergusson believes them to be Aboriginal tribals. He says, as there is no appropriate name, he would "unhesitatingly" suggest them to be called as "Takshaka", like Colonel Todd did. This is because, they are essentially serpent worshipers and "Naaga and Takshaka being synonymous appellations in Sanskrit for snake, and Takshaka is the celebrated Naagavamsha of the early heroic history of India." He believes, these people were converted to Buddhism, as he says:

"From their appearing so frequently on Buddhist monuments, we may certainly assume that they were converted eventually to Buddhism, and being a tribe dwelling in woods, their priests may have become forest ascetics ..." [Fergusson: 1971: 94]

He further avers that they were the real architects of India, their original home was near Takshsila, the important seat of serpent worship, and from there they spread all over India. [Fergusson: 1971: 95]

Antiquity of Naaga worship

Fergusson believes that, Snake worship was an old and prevalent form of original faith all over India before Aryans arrived, and Aryans adopted it gradually as they intermarried with indigenous Naaga people. He remarks:

"It is not mentioned in Vedas, hardly hinted at in Ramayana, occupies a considerable space in Mahabharata, appears timidly at Sanchi in the first century of our era, and is triumphant at Amaravati in the fourth, and might have become dominant faith of India had it not been elbowed from its place of power by Vishnuism and Shaivism, which took its place when it fell together with the religion of Buddha, to which it had allied itself so closely." [Fergusson:1971:114]

"Tri Ratna - not Trishul"

On a fallen pillar of Southern gate way at Sanchi, along with a Bo tree, an emblem, which Fergusson conjectures to be a "Trishul" is found. Such is also found at Amarawati and Karle, and many Buddhist monuments at various places. It is not a trishul, as we understand from weapon of Shiva. Trishul has a central prong prominent and longer because of its use as a weapon, and also has a long handle. The emblem found in Buddhist monuments is "Tri- Ratna", which denotes Buddha, Dhamma and Sangha. It has roundish contour, a smaller middle prong and no handle. It is also found on the chest of Buddhist images, and was later copied by Brahmins to be carved on Vishnu images, as Fergusson further observes:

"General Cunningham suggests that this afterwards became emblem of Juggernath, with his brother and sister. In this suggestion, I entirely agree, but the transformation took place at a period long subsequent to that we are now engaged upon. The more I look at it the more do I become convinced that Vishnuism is only very corrupt Buddhism." [Fergusson: 1971: 125]

Amaravati and Tree worship

As is well known, Buddha at Amaravati is now a days is worshipped as Shiva, the subject being discussed more fully by us elsewhere. [Tirupati Balaji was a Buddhist Shrine, p. 10]. The Tree worship and Naaga worship are well known methods of Buddhist practices. After conversion to Brahmanism, even now they form important part of ritual at Amareswara. Fergusson, while describing tree worship at Amaravati, observes:

"The following is a curious instance of irradicability of local forms, even long after the religion to which they belonged may have perished. At the present day, during the festival of Navaratri, in honour of Shiva at Amareswar, the immortal lord, on the third night a brazen tree is carried round the town in procession; on the fifth night a ten headed serpent in brass. At the close of the festival the worshipers go in great pomp to a tree called Shemmu Veerchum, where the god is made to exercise in shooting an arrow at the sacred tree, followed by discharge of fire arms in the air, which closes the ceremony. In the festival called Shiva Maharatri, the procession to the same tree is the culminating point, to which all previous arrangements are subordinate, and thus the festival closes." [Fergusson: 1971: 171]

Mihirkula and Feet marks of Buddha

The feet marks of Buddha are seen in many places at Amaravati, and are also seen stamped on cloths there. Mihirkula, a Shaivite king of Kashmir, is well known as the enemy of Buddhists. He waged a war against Sri Lanka, because his wife happened to wear a jacket of Simhala cloth, which was stamped with feet marks of Buddha. The impression came off on her bosom, and the king became indignant and invaded Ceylon, and forced him to stamp the cloth in future with a golden sun. [Fergusson: 1971: 189]

Tribals are Naagas

Fergusson describes mainly two types of persons worshiping Buddha and being disciples of Buddhism. Turanians are the Dravidians, also termed the Naagas, whom we now know as aboriginal tribal population. Who are the people, whom Fergusson referred to as Hindoos. He himself has cleared the point. : "... the sculpture meant to represent the inhabitants of the province now known as Upper Bengal, more specially of the districts of Tirhoot and Behar, which were assuredly the cradle of Buddhism. ..." [Fergusson: 1971: 225]

The people who are associated with Buddha in both the stupas of Sanchi and Amarawati, are the mixed race of Bengal, with some Aryan blood, but mostly which was mixed with the aboriginal tribes of Bengal before Aryan invasion. That the Buddhism could rise on its ruins, is the evidence of it.

Another important question is, Are the people who wear the snake hoods are as same race or not. Fergusson believes that the difference is only artistic, they are the same people but of two different nations. He explains that these are the aboriginal tribes.:

"The people whose manners and customs appear to present the closest affinities with what we found on the monuments, are those known as the Gonds and other closely allied tribes inhabiting the country to the south of the Vindhya hills. From their language we learn that they were allied to Dravidians, now occupying nearly the whole of Madras Presidency, ..." [Fergusson: 1971:225]

After careful study of figures, Fergusson comes to conclusion that people with snakes are the Naaga people. [Fergusson: 1971: 192]

Adivasis in South India

Most ancients were "Villavar", (bowmen) identified with Bhils and "Minaver" (fishers) identified with Meenas. The other group is termed by the Sangam poets as Naagas, whom Hindu books depict as semi divine beings, half men and half snake, but Tamil poets describe them as warrior race with bows and nooses and famous as free booters. Various tribes are mentioned like Aruvalar in Arvunadu, and Aruva vadatalai, Eyinar, Maravar, Oliyar, and Paradavar (fisher tribe), who are certainly belonged to Naaga stock. [Cambridge hist. of India, vol. I, p. 539]

The main dynasties ruling Tamil country were of land tilling class. Pandyas, claiming descent from a tribe styled Maarar, Chola kings from tribe Tirayyirar, and Chera from Vaanavar tribe. Even in first century A.D., the country was free from Brahman caste system, thanks to the influence of strong Buddhist and Jain churches. [Cambridge hist. of India, p. 540]

Satavahanas were Buddhists and not of Brahmanic faith

Because Goutamiputra Satkarni performed the *yajnyas*, as mentioned in Nanaghat inscription of Naaganika, some scholars tend to think that he belonged to Brahmanic faith. This is a wrong interpretation. Shri Kosare

feels the nature of these vedic *yajnyas* must be considered as a political act of a Kshatriya to raise ones own political prestige, status and glory as an Emperor. These *yajnyas* had absolutely no Brahmanic effect on the republican style of their social culture in Satvahana times. Similarly, there are no records to show that any other king of Satvahana dynasty performed any vedic sacrifices. On the contrary, it appears that Buddhism flourished and developed to a great extent during the Satvahana period only. [Kosare:1989:167]

Brahmanic traditions do not depict correct picture

It is now well recognised that Brahmanic books try to depict the superiority of Aryan / Sanskritic / Brahmanic culture and ignore the vast population, which had always been against this culture. Prof. Rhys Davids, aptly, points out this mentality:

"It is the accepted belief that it is in the literature of the brahmins that we find the evidence as to the religious beliefs of the peoples of India in the sixth and seventh centuries B.C. This seems to me more than doubtful. The priests have preserved for us, not so much the opinions the people actually held, as the opinions the priests wished them to hold. ... We see how unreasonable it would be to expect that the brahmins, whose difficulties were so much greater, should have been able to do more. What they have done they have done accurately and well. But the record they have saved for us is a partial record. [Rhys Davids, "Buddhist India", p.210]

Language of masses was Pali

That similar misinformation is spread by the Brahmanic claims that Sanskrit was lingua franca of India is clear when he avers:

"What had happened with respect to religious belief is on a par with what had happened with respect to language. From Takkasila all the way down to Champa no one spoke Sanskrit. The living language, everywhere, was a sort of Pali. ... in the schools of the priests, and there only, a knowledge of the Vedic language (which we often call Sanskrit) was kept up. But even this Sanskrit of the schools had progressed, as some would say, or had degenerated, as others would say, from the Vedic standard. And the Sanskrit in actual use in the schools was as far removed the Vedic dialact as it is from the so-called classical Sanskrit of the post Buddhistic poems and plays." [Rhys Davids, p. 211]

The religion of masses was not Vedic

The brahmanic books, and their propaganda by the vested interests, try to give an impression that the religious beliefs of Indian masses also were Vedic. This is far from the truth. Rhys Davids remarks:

"So with the religion, outside the schools of the priests the curious and interesting beliefs recorded in the Rig Veda had practically little effect. The Vedic thaumaturgy and theosophy had indeed never been a popular faith, that is, as we know it. ... The gods more usually found in the older system - the dread Mother Earth, the dryads and the dragons, the dog-star, even the moon the sun have been cast into the shade by the new ideas (the new gods) of the fire, the exciting drink, and the thunderstorm. And the charm of the mystery and the magic of the ritual of the sacrifice had to contend, so far as the laity were concerned, with the distaste induced by its complications and its expense. ... Those beliefs (in Rig Veda) seem to us, and indeed are, so bizarre and absurd, that it is hard to accept the proposition that they give expression to an advanced stage to thought. And one is so accustomed to consider the priesthood as the great obstacle, in India, an way of reform, that it is difficult to believe that the brahmins could ever, as a class have championed the newer views.

"But a comparison with the general course of the evolution of religious beliefs elsewhere shows that the beliefs recorded in the Rig Veda are not primitive. A consideration of the nature of those beliefs, so far as they are not found elsewhere, shows that they must have been, in the view of the men who formulated them, a kind of advance on, or reform of, the previous ideas, and at least three lines of evidence all tend to show that certainly all the time we are here considering, and **almost certainly at the time when the Rig Veda was finally closed there were many other beliefs, commonly held among the Aaryans in India, but not represented in that Veda.**" [Rhys Davids, Buddhist India, p. 212]

Atharva Veda is more ancient

It is well known that there are in reality only two Vedas, Rig and Atharva, the other two Sama and Yajus being the compilation of verses mostly from Rig, with a few more ideas being added. Out of these two, Atharva has got beliefs more ancient, the beliefs of ancient original residents, and therefore, the brahmins for a long time did not recognise it as a Veda, neither did the Buddhists. Rhys Davids explains:

"The first of these three lines is the history of the Atharva Veda. This invaluable old collection of charms to be used in sorcery had been actually put together long before Buddhism arose. But it was only just before that time it had come to be acknowledged by the sacrificial priests as Veda inferior to their own three older ones, but still a Veda. This explains why it is that Atharva is never mentioned as a Veda in the Buddhist canonical books. ... Yet it is quite certain that the beliefs and practices to which the Atharva Veda is devoted are as old, if not older, than those to which the three other Vedas refer; and that they were commonly held and followed by the Aryans in India. ..." [Rhys Davids, "Buddhist India", p.213]

Forest folks were looked after by Ashoka

An account of his Kalinga conquest and its effects is given by Ashoka himself in Rock Edict XIII. After the horrible disaster, he expressed profound sorrow and regret for the war, and started spreading Buddhism. About the forest dwellers he said, in the same edict:

"Even upon the forest-folk in his dominion, His Sacred Majesty looks kindly and he seeks to make them think aright, for, if he did not, repentance would come upon His Sacred Majesty. They are bidden to turn from evil ways that they be not chastised. For His Sacred Majesty desires that all animated beings should have security, self control, peace of mind and joyousness." [Mahajan, "Ancient India", p. 276]

Why Ashoka was sympathetic towards Adivasis is explained by todays Adivasi scholars: because "he was himself of the same blood", says Venkatesh Atram as well as L. K. Madavi. [Venkatesh Atram, "Gondi sanskuti che sandarbha", p. 51]

Naagas flourished before Guptas

Among the important monarchies flourishing before the rise of Guptas, the most important were the Naaga dynasties, and also many Republics. They were scattered all over India, as proved by literary, epigraphic and numismatic evidence. Vidisha, Kantipuri, Mathura and Padmavati were all Naaga powers, according to Puranas. We know from inscriptions, that Bharshiv Naagas came into power after fall of Kushanas. We have some coins of Bhava Naaga of Padmawati. In Puranas nine Naagas are mentioned by name. Powerful King Virsen of Mathura was also perhaps a Naaga. Guptas flourished by marriage of Chandragupta I, with princes

Kumar Devi of Licchavis, whom Manusmriti had condemned as "Vratya Ksatriyas". Allahabad Pillar inscription mentions of marriage of Chandragupta II with a Naaga princess Kuveranaga. Thus though the Guptas rose to power with the help of Naagas, they terminated Naaga kings like Ganpati Naaga and Naagsena, and most of the Naaga republics. [Mahajan, Ancient India, p. 406 ff.]

Republics of Tribals were destroyed by Samudragupta

The disappearance of the republics about 400 A.D. was due to the imperialism of the Guptas, according to Jaiswal, who said, "Samudragupta, like Alexander, killed the free spirit of the country. He destroyed the Malavas and the Yaudheyas who were the nursery of freedom and many others of their class." As Dr. Altekar pointed out, even after Samudragupta, the republics of the Malavas, the Yaudheyas, the Madras and the Arjunayanas maintained their existence and autonomy, though now, under suzerainty of Guptas. However, the leadership became hereditary, and under those circumstances the republics disappeared and monarchy became the general rule. [Mahajan, p. 201]

The Pala Period

Many people are under a wrong impression, that after Harshavardhana in seventh century, there were no Buddhist Kings. They conveniently forget that Palas ruled for four centuries, and they ruled nearly whole of north India. They were staunch Buddhists and no brahmins were left after their reign in Bengal, so the Senas, who came after Palas, had to import the Brahmins, for yadnyas.

The area under control of Palas is the area of Naagas and is now an Adivasi tract. It was from Palas that the Buddhism finished, or mostly so. So they are the last remnants of Buddhism. Therefore, their history deserves special study by the Buddhists. That is why the tribal belt extends from North East Provinces, lower Bihar, some parts of Bengal, some parts of Orissa, Madhya Pradesh, Chatisgadh and Bastar and adjoining part in Chandrapur Gadchiroli and the parts of Andhra? The relationship of Pala kingdom with Adivasi tracts is not discussed by the scholars.

The Adivasi scholars start the history of Adivasis from the Gonds kings in Sirpur in Andhra, and in old Chandrapur district, which is now divided into two, and in Bastar and Chattisgadh and Madhya Pradesh etc. Some

people like to connect themselves to the people of the neolithic age, as if nothing has happened in the mean time. Then they are silent about the period in between. They not only remain silent, but do not try to understand the reasons why their history is ignored by the Brahmanic scholars. But even then, from scanty references, it is possible to reconstruct the history of tribal population in the area.

A mention is made about Tribal kings as Naaga kings in post Harsha period in Madhya Pradesh. The Tunga kings, Jayasimha, ruled over the whole of Gondama (or Gondama) which is sometimes specifically referred to as Eighteen Gondama. Gondama has been taken to mean the Gond tribe, but it probably denotes a territory, which was perhaps the entire hilly tract extending from Bonal and Barma in the north up Jeypore in the Visakhapatnam District in the south. [Imperial Kanauj, p.77]

An account in a book by the poet Padmagupta, of the court of a Paramara king, Navasahasanka Sindhuraja, is considered historical and it narrates how a Naaga king ruling south of the Narmada sought help from Sindhuraja against a neighboring demon-king named Vajrankusa, and gave his daughter Shashiprabha to him after their killing the demon king. It is suggested that the Naaga king was a chief of the Naaga dynasty ruling in old Bastar State, and the demon-king was a chief of the Non-Aryan Mana tribe of Vajra, modern Wairagarh, presently in Chandrpur District of Maharashtra. [Imperial Kanauj, p.97]

Also mention is made of Vijayaditya II, coming into conflict with a Naaga king probably of the Bastar region. [Imperial Kanauj, p.134]

The Pala Kingdom comprised tribal areas

After the death of Harshavardhana, the brahmins regained the lost prestige and started converting people to brahmanism through the means of force by creating small principalities. The empire was broken down and only small feudatories under the newly created Rajput clans started appearing. R. C. Majumdar, explains how the Palas stopped this political disintegration of Bengal resulting in anarchy and confusion for more than a century after the death of Sasanka, the king of Bengal and strong enemy of Buddhism and of Harshavardhana, and how in the middle of the eighth century A.D., a heroic and laudable effort was made to remedy the miserable state of affairs. Realizing at last, that all the troubles of masses were due to the absence of a strong central authority, the numerous chiefs exercising sovereignty in different parts of the country did set up

such a regime by voluntary surrender of powers to one popular leader. This shows no small credit upon the sagacity and sacrifice of the leaders of Bengal who rose to the occasion and selected one among themselves to be the sole ruler of Bengal to whom they all paid willing allegiance. Majumdar comments:

"... It is not every age, it is not every nation that can show such a noble example of subordinating private interests to public welfare. The nearest parallel is the great political change that took place in Japan in A.D. 1870. The result was almost equally glorious and the great bloodless revolution ushered in an era of glory and prosperity such as Bengal has never enjoyed before or since." [Majumdar R. C., "The Age of Imperial Kanauj" HCIP vol. IV, p 44]

The hero was one Gopala (c. 750-770 A.D.), whose early accounts are uncertain, but he came to be known as a Kshatriya and was a Buddhist. All his successors also were Buddhists and the dynasty ruled over a vast area for about four hundred years. The "bloodless revolution", was no doubt religiously motivated. This was also the time when Tantrika Buddhism made its appearance, and the religious leadership passed on to the lower castes in the society, to such an extent that after the fall of Palas, their successors had to import the brahmins for performance of yadnyas.

After Gopala, his son Dharmapala (c.770-810 A.D.), came on throne. He was a hero of hundred battles, and had assumed full imperial tiles. He held a most magnificent durbar at Kanauj, to proclaim himself as the suzerain. Vassals attending durbar, among others, were the rulers of Bhoja, Mastsya, Madra, Kuru, Yadu, Yavana, Avanti, Gandhara and Kira, who uttered acclamations of approval "bowing down respectfully with their diadems trembling." He is described as the "Lord of Northern India"" (Uttarapathasvamin)." [Majumdar, ibid., p.46]

He was ruling over a vast territory. Bengal and Bihar, which formed its nucleus, were directly ruled by him. Beyond this the kingdom of Kanauj, roughly corresponding to modern U.P., was a close dependency, whose ruler was nominated by, and directly subordinate to, him. Further to the west and south, in the Punjab, Western Hill States, Rajputana, Malwa and Berar, were a number of vassal states whose rulers acknowledged him as their overlord and paid him homage and obedience. According to tradition

preserved in the "Svayambhu-Purana", Nepal was also a vassal state of Dharmapala. [Majumdar, p.47]

His grateful subjects fully realized his greatness and sung in his praise all over the country. He was great patron of Buddhism and founder of Vikramshila University, named after his another name, and a great vihara at Sompuri in Varendra. He also built Odantpuri Vihara in Bihar as per Tibetian sourses, though credit is given to his father or son by some scholars. Great Buddhist author Haribhadra flourished during his reign. Majumdar laments that his greatness, though sung by masses, "it is irony of fate that he should have been forgotten in the land of his birth but his memory should be kept green in Tibet." [Ibid., p.49] What is so strange about it? It had always been the practice of brahmanic scholars to kill the memory of great non-brahmanic dignitaries by non-mention, and if we may say so, it continues even today. No non-brahmanic king is remembered by the priestly scholars of this country. Chandragupta Maurya is remembered in a fiction "Mudrarakshasa" written thousand years later; Ashoka is remembered by his edicts and credit of identifying Ashoka of Cylonese chronicles with Piyadassi of edicts goes to James Prinsep; Kanishika is remembered by his coins, Chinese sourses and Buddhist MSS, and "Buddhacharita" of Ashvaghosha; King Milinda by foreign accounts and Harshavardhana mainly by Huen Tsang's writings. For the elite of this country, even Alexander the great never existed.

Dharmapala was succeeded by his son Devapala who had a long reign of about forty years. He was a great patron of Buddhism like his father, and his fame spread to many Buddhist countries outside India. Devapala granted five villages on the request of Balaputradeva, a king of a powerful Buddhist Dynasty, in the East Indies, in order to endow a monastery at Nalanda. Another record informs us that a learned Buddhist priest, hailing from Naagarahara (Jelalabad), received high honors from Devapala and was appointed the head of Nalanda monastery. [Majumdar, p. 52]

After Devapala, glory of Pala empire declined. Though to a large extent, Mahipala tried to restore it. The Brahmanical dynasty of Senas overtook them. Senas, had to import Brahmins to their kingdom from other Brahmanical areas and start the infamous "Kulin" system, to reestablish Brahmin supremacy.

The reason why we like to stress the importance of the history of Pala Kings, is that they were Buddhists and their subjects were Buddhists, and

at the present time, the area under the influence of Pala kings is the exact area which is occupied by the present day Adivasis. This shows that they were reduced to their present state, after the fall of Palas, due to neglect by and the atrocities of the Brahmanical forces during post Pala period. Though the miseries of tribals had started with the rise of Guptas, they had no protector left after the fall of Palas.

Rise of Rajputs was mostly from Tribals

After the fall of Harsha, the Rajputs were created by the Brahmins, with the intention of fighting with the Buddhists by physical force. Through the Agnikula theory four dynasties of foreigners like Hunas were hinduised in North India, and in south India, through hiranyagarbha mahadana five dynasties were created out of tribal Buddhists. The subject is discussed fully by us elsewhere, suffice here to mention that also some tribal chiefs were among those who became the Rajputs. Giving example of House of Mewar which played important role in political and military history of India for centuries to come, and gave heroes like Bapa Raval, Rana Sanga, and Rana Pratap, Stella Kramerish observes:

"Formerly they (Bhils) ruled over their own country. This was prior to the arrival or Rajputs. The Rajputs, the 'sons of king', invaded the country, subsequently Rajasthan in about sixth century A. D. They became Kshatriyas, the nobility par excellence of India. Some of these Rajput princes, including the most exalted of them, the Rana of Mewar, at the inception of their rule, had their foreheads marked with the blood of a Bhil. It was drawn from his thumb or big toe. This was an acknowledgement of the precedence of Bhils as rulers of the country". [Stella Kramerish, "Selected writings of Stella Kramerish", Philadelphia Museum of Art, 1968, p. 90; fn:- Koppers, "Die Bhil", p.14]

Rajputs came from Tribals

In North India, Rajputs were made on the Mount Abu, by a purificatory yadna and four important dynasties were created to physically oppose the Buddhists and accept the supremacy of Brahmins. Some were remnants of Hunas and some were tribals. But the Brahmins took special precaution to limit the admittance to Rajputs to only a few important people, and the rest were remaining as ordinary castes, as explained by Balkrishna Nair.

In Southern India, the rite performed for purification, conversion, and initiation into awarding Ksatriyahood was called "Hiranya-garbhs

mahadana" and the king was designated as Hiranya- garbha-prasuta, i.e. "one who performed the sacred rite of hiranya-garbha which consists in the performer passing through an egg of gold which was afterwards distributed among the officiating priests". [D. C. Sircar, 'The Classical Age', HCIP vol. III, p. 225]

The Hiranya garbha prasuta kings of South India belong to the dynasties of: (1) Ananda gotra connected with Chezarla. (2) Vishnukundin connected with Srisaila. (3) Chalukyas. (4) Pandyas and (5) Rashtrakutas.

Most, if not all, of them were Buddhist Tribals, but after accepting Brahmin supremacy they fought with Palas as well as among themselves, thus instituting a tripartrite struggle for centuries, till they all handed over the reigns of the country to Muslims. The detailed discussion of them is beyond scope of this article.

With their conversion, all their deities got converted into Brahmanic deitis, like Jaganath Puri, Pandharpur, Ayyapa, Draksharama, Srisailam, Badrikeswara and many more including Tirupati, as explained in my book "tirupati Balaji was a Buddhist Shrine". Only one example is given below how tribal Madiyas became devotees of Puri.

Tribals worship Danteswari and are disciples of Jagannatha of Puri

The tribal population of Bastar, known as Madiyas, as is well known, are Naagas, and they were referred as Naagas in inscriptions. What is not well known is that they have a Rath Yatra, very much like that of Puri. As explained by us in "Tirupati Balaji was a Buddhist Shrine", both Rath Yatra and Puri Temple are of Buddhist origin. Also the name "Danteswari" of their deity is strongly suggestive of "Dantpura", where Tooth Relic of the Buddha is being worshiped, which now is Jagannatha of Puri. The following are the excerpts from the article by Bhai Mahavir, who attended Dushera festival of Madiyas, and describes it as "a Dussehra without any mention of the Ramayana". Even the date of Dushera is significant, as prior to Dr. Ambedkar's conversion to Buddhism in 1956, the Hindu Panchangas used to depict Dushera as the date of birth of the Buddha, though Buddhist tradition places it on Veshakh full moon day. He writes:

"While for a large part of the country, Dussehra gets its name from the victory of Ram over the 10 headed Ravana, ... in Bastar we have none of this. There is no Sita abduction, no Hanuman search mission and no Ram-Ravana battle. You do not see the spectacle of any effigies of

Ravana, Kumbhakarna and Meghnath going up in flames as its finals. In fact, when this idea was mooted once, tribal leaders did not welcome it."

Author explains how Baster's Dussehra is connected with their own favourite deity, Danteshwari, unknown elsewhere. The festival, lasting virtually for two and a half months, is not mere entertainment, but a genuine religious practice and an essential part of their culture and philosophy.

Ratha Yatra being the main part, its preparation starts early, and different villages having well-designated duties of fetching wood meant for specified parts of the Rath. It is pulled with long ropes by about 500 Madiya tribals of Kilpal, a privilege they jealously guard.

The fourth ruler of Bastar, Raja Purushottam Dev, who ascended the throne in 1408 AD, performed Dandavat (prostration) pilgrimage from Baster to Jagannath Puri, offered lots of precious gifts with one lakh gold mohurs to temple, and started the Ratha Yatra. Like in several states, the practice continued till the tragic death of Pravinchandra Bhanjdev. Now only the chhatra and the chief pujari of Danteshwari temple of Jagdalpur ride it. All the tribes bring their favourite deities with their chhatras to the courtyard of the royal palace. The whole town is out jostling to watch the gigantic chariot being pulled by hundreds of devotees.

The tribes of Bastar are no Vaishnavites (vegetarians), they are devotes of Danteswari, though their Danteshwari Temple, at Dantewada, in Bastar, has an idol of Nandi and an image of Shiva. The Rath Yatra commences with a goat sacrifice, and no less than five goats are sacrificed by the time the festivals conclude. [An article "Without Ram or Ravana" by Bhai Mahavir in "Indian Express", Nagpur, 4.12.99]

Why the Adivasis Struggle can not succeed in Hindu India

Excluding the population of Africa, India is the largest habitat of Adivasis. They are mostly divided into three geographical areas. A group in North East provinces, the "seven sisters", are having Mongoloid influence. The second group, the "Central" group is in Bihar, Orrisa, Madhya Pradesh, Telangana and Vidarbha extends upto sea in the east and has Gond and Santhal origin. The Western group has mostly Bhil influence.

The Constitution of India has taken note of these areas and the first group is placed under Schedule VI and the rest are placed in Schedule V.

About the condition of all these adivasis, less said the better. Whereas the tribals in VI schedule are fighting a loosing battle against the Manuvadi social order, those in other areas are fast getting hinduised and accepting the Brahmanic values, and pessimistic about their struggle.

The main question is why they are not getting any success in their struggle. The reason as explained by Kanshiram, long time back, is that they are fighting isolatedly and the reason is that they do not like to identify themselves as one of the co- sufferers among the multitudes of castes suffering under the tyranny of brahmanic social order. He appeals to them to organize their struggle together with these multitudes under one banner. [Adivasi-Bharat ke Mulnivasi, hindi, p. 10]

Chapter 6

GURUKULA SYSTEM OF EDUCATION RUINED INDIA
Blame on modern education

It is now a days fashionable to praise highly the *'Gurukul System'* of education, and condemn the British system of education now prevalent in India, and attributing to it all the discredit, and holding it responsible for all the ills of present day India. Many prominent highly educated ignorants, like one of the Vice-Chancellors of an Indian University, also seem to hold similar views. It can not be gainsaid that the present educational system needs some changes, but certainly, it can not be accepted that 'gurukul system' is an answer.

Is education responsible for unemployment?

Those who criticize British system, think that the present system is responsible for unemployment, presumably because 'educated youths' become useless for manual labour and white collar jobs are not available in plenty. The argument is not new. At the time of Mahatma Jotirao Phule, his father was advised by his Brahmin *'divanji'* to withdraw the child from school as the child will be useless for agriculture. Thanks to Ligit sahib and Gaffar Beg Munshi, who persuaded Govindrao, Jotiba's father, against the advice and restarted the education of the child after waste of three years, and thus a "Father of Social Revolution in India" was born.

Whispering Campaign

It is Goebbels, Hitler's propaganda chief, who is customarily quoted as ultimate example of how a relentless communication effort can change public opinion and brain wash the masses. But in India, since times immemorial, in addition to *bhajan, kirtan, pravachana*, there is a powerful whispering method of propagation of ideas. In this method, you do not have to give a sermon or a lecture or write an article or make T.V. serial. All you do is to casually whisper among your co-participants in any social, religious or political function. It may be casual meeting when you are on trip to market to get vegetables or attending somebody's marriage or a lecture in the hall or seeing a cinema in ganesh festival. You casually mention your idea. Only thing it must be done purposefully, and in strong terms. The fellow opposite usually agrees with you on these occasions. If

he does not seem to agree, you change the subject. By this method, the ideas can be planted in the minds of the gullible. Specially the religious minded OBCs are a vulnerable group.

One such idea is, education better be in mother tongue, that way it is easier to understand and retain, etc. etc. But their own children are sent to English Convent schools. In their houses, not only servants but also the cats and dogs and other pets are conversed with in English.

Other idea is 'best is agriculture, medium is business and worst is the service'. The concerned advisers are of course sending their children to lucrative services. Some articles are written also, as a part of such a campaign. It is not due to ignorance but is by design. Similar is this advice to masses by these classes. One hears many people saying, what is the use of taking education when services are so scarce. This is wrong idea in the minds of 'masses' rooted by 'classes'. The scarcity of jobs should not deter the masses from obtaining the degrees. The mind gets developed and one can get the wisdom to differentiate between good and bad. One can make best use of Information Technology which can be put to best advantage of the public. For example, the situation is turning in such a way that, in near future, one can not be, called a literate, if one does not know about computers. Let us forget about computing in regional languages, with due apology to C-Dac, (and its erstwhile OBC chief - Vijay Bhatkar), you can not catch up with the world that way. As it is, it appears that, the revolution of Internet has already bypassed India's dalitbahujans for want of knowledge of English language.

Was the British Education only for making Babus?

Many people pretend to think so. It is not true even in superficial sense. One can not ignore the awakening and aspirations created by Christian Missionaries in the minds of masses. But what were choices available to the British that time? Lord McCauley who was responsible for making the choice of Modern English Education for Indians, had only one other alternative, i.e. to give traditional education of Sanskrit and vernacular languages and Brahmanic sastras. Who would have benefited there by. When we know that early Brahmins opposed the education of masses about secular education. Would they have allowed the non-Brahmins to learn sastras?

In the reign of last Peshava, *daxina* was given to all and sundry Brahmins. Brahmins used to come from Kanchi, Srirampattam, Kumbhkonam, Tanjawar, Kashi, Kanoj and Mathura and flock together to create a crowd in Poona, once numbering sixty thousand at a time. We also know that even after the end of Peshawai, a very welcome event by the masses, and specially the women of Poona, Britishers continued to please Brahmins, though with reduced amount, for Sanskrit books. When there was demand for daxina by other Brahmins for marathi books, there was hue and cry from orthodox Brahmins. However, later, half the amount was given to Marathi books also after a big struggle. Thus Brahmins resisted against Marathi to prevent lower classes from learning. [Dhanjay Keer, "Mahatma Phule", (MF) marathi, p. 38 ff.] Would they have allowed the non-Brahmins to get benefit of Britishers?

In any case, it was the good fortune of Indian masses, that modern education was decided to be imparted to them by Lord McCauley. Otherwise, there would have been no spread of modern ideas and whatever little enlightenment we now see in masses would not have been there. They would have been slaves of the Brahmins, who in the name religion controlled their minds. Now at least the SCs and STs are out of their grip, and some OBCs also are out of their fetters, though the majority of OBCs are still slaves of Brahmins, in spite of all efforts by the Bahujan leaders like Phule, Shahu, Ambedkar, Periyar, Narayan Guru and many others like them. The elite wants to hide from the masses that, India had a double slavery. Slavery of masses by Brahmins was the real slavery in micro level, experienced in every nook and corner of the country. Slavery of British was over the macro level and was not important to masses. They never came in contact with those rulers. They only came in contact with local rulers, who were Brahmins, no matter who ruled above. That is the reason south Indian leaders like Dr. P. Varadrajulu Naydu said that **British Imperialism has enslaved our bodies only, but Brahmanism has enslaved our souls. The British have taken away our wealth but as it has dominance over social and religious fields, Brahmanism has killed the feeling of self respect and freedom in the minds of non- Brahmins.** [MF-p.314] This feeling was universal among the masses. The British knew that, if these ignorant masses get educated, they will one day snatch away the powers from the British, and even then they did not deprive us from knowledge, in contrast to Brahmanism who kept us in ignorance.

What was the essence of Gurukul Education?

Those who are fond of Gurukul education, know well its draw backs, but will not speak because of their vested interests. First thing gurukul was never open to the majority of masses. About 85 to 90 percent of population was outside the pale of Gurukuls. Only the 15 percent population was being catered by Gurukuls. That too, only the boys were admitted and not the girls, thus bringing the total possible population to be only about seven percent.

There were no criteria for admission apart from the caste and whims and fancies of the teacher. Examples of denial of admission to very meritorious candidates on the basis of caste are seen. Glaring example is of Eklavya. Not only the guru Dronacharya denied admission to Eklavya, but demanded Eklavya's thumb as gurudakshina for education NOT imparted by him. Many people feel it is irony of fate and mockery of awards, that such a name is associated with highest sports awards in this country, without any protest from the sufferers of the system.

Second example is of Karna, who got admission to Parashurama's class, which was exclusively reserved for the Brahmins, on false statement of caste. Benefit of his knowledge, labeled as unlawfully obtained, was withdrawal when his caste became known, which ultimately lead to his death.

Example of Satyakama Jabala is mentioned by many orthodox people to erroneously show that education in Upanishadic times was open to low caste people. This is a wrong inference drawn from his story. Satyakama was asked by his guru his caste. His mother sent a word to the guru that she did not know the exact father of the child as she had relations with many people. This frank statement, the guru declared, can only be a statement of a son of a Brahmin. So the admission to the gurukul was done on the basis of Brahmin caste. **Not only that, the test applied by him, and his presumption of Brahmin caste, was derogatory to non-Brahmins, because it was his belief that only Brahmins could speak such a truth and non-Brahmins could not have uttered such truth.** It may be noted that the declaration was made by the child's mother, who had no right to education. How a bold statement by mother can decide the caste of putative father, is a mystery, nobody has ever talked about.

What were the criteria of selection of teachers in Gurukul?

Propagators of Gurukul system seem to be very sure that teachers selected were of high caliber in knowledge and character. How this idea takes a root, is difficult to understand. As a matter of fact there was no central authority controlling the appointment of teachers. There was no fixed syllabus. The main purpose of this learning was to preserve the Vedas and guard them from non-Brahmins. Each and every person by virtue of being born as a Brahmin had an inherent right to be a teacher. He could open an *ashram* and take pupils as and when he likes, and he could give certificate of completion of studies as and when he chooses. He was not bound by any law of land nor any convention of teachers' body. There used to be guilds and bodies of merchants and craftsmen, but I am unaware if some institution was established to supervise the teaching and conduct of the teacher in such gurukuls. Most of the gurukuls were single teacher residential ones free from any royal or academic control. What was the guarantee of quality under these circumstances? It is a matter of egotism, vanity and conceit to think of quality in such teaching institutions. These *gurukuls* had no respect in foreign lands and never attracted any foreign students.

What was the course content?

There seems to be misconceived idea that a student coming out from such a school had all the requisite qualities of a good citizen. This is far from the truth. He used to have learned by heart the Brahmanic sastras, which hardly make him versatile. He could never think of outside matters. What is not in his books, does not exist for him. Al Biruni, for example, mentioned that Indian scholars have no knowledge of civilization abroad, and they disbelieve if somebody tells them about it. Their thought process centered around the rituals, *vratas* and ceremonies.

The Brahmanic knowledge consisted of recital of Vedas, without understanding the meaning of what is being recited, and was miles away from the actual life of productive castes. As a matter of fact, it was enjoined that the reciter must not try to understand the meaning of what he reads. Prof. Kancha Ilaiah feels it ironical that "the recitation of several names of one God or many Gods is construed as wisdom, whereas knowing the language of production and the names of productive tools is not recognized as knowledge. ..." [Kancha: 1998: 6] This system has

remained in practice till this date and as a result of this todays education has suffered as he mentions:

"... Because of their Vedic background, 'upper' castes perceive knowledge as reading and reciting. In the process they have rendered all higher educational institutions into text book recitation centres." [Kancha: 1998: 63]

He further observes:

"The Dalitbahujan masses have enormous technological and engineering skills which are not divorced from their labour. One who lifts dead cattle also knows the science of skinning it. They themselves know how to process the skin and make chappals, shoes or ropes. All these tasks involve both mental and physical labour. This work is not like reading the Vedas or teaching in a school. Reading the Vedas or teaching in a school does not require much investment or physical labour or creative thought. ... Why not celebrate the beauty and skill of a Gouda ... Training in this specialization is much more dangerous and difficult than training in reading the Vedas. ..." [Kancha: 1998: 122]

At one time even the Brahmins must have had the skill of skinning the animals, when, as Ambedkar puts it, "For the Brahmin every day was a beef-steak day". Ambedkar has discussed this topic in great detail with quotations from *Atreya Brahmana* and concludes: **"Brahmins were not merely beef-eaters but they were also butchers"**. But they lost this skill when they became vegetarians in order to outsmart the Buddhists. [W&S, 7, 335 ff.] Therefore, during the days of decline of Buddhism, as a part of *Kalivarjya* changes in laws during the so called Rajput period, say from 900 - 1200 A.D., we find a restriction on the Brahmins, not to kill the animals themselves, and they were prohibited from becoming a "*shyamitra*", i.e. one who kills animals by strangling or suffocating, during a *yajnya*. [Kane: 1965: 1002]

Ideals of Education in Brahmanism

The ideals of any system is depicted by the gods and goddess those are worshipped as depicting the ideal. Saraswati, as is well known, was originally a Buddhist deity as its earliest representation was evident in Buddhist monuments and not in Brahmanic ones. It was on Bharhut railing pillar, that there is a standing female figure playing on harp and J.

N. Banerjea considers it as "the earliest representation of Saraswati in Indian Art." and that her separate figures became common from late Gupta period. [Banerjea :1955 :314, Jamanadas:1991:95]

Saraswati is depicted in late Brahmanism as the goddess of education by the Brahmins. As Kancha Ilaiah has explained, during the process of manipulating consciousness of Dalitbahujans to build consent systems among the groups they wanted to exploit, Brahmanism developed a socio-economic and cultural design systematically, so that many gods and goddesses of such groups, were adapted by Brahmanism creating images of many Gods against universal ethic of monotheism. Kancha Ilaiah further observes:

"Brahma's wife is known as Saraswati, which also means learning. The construction of Brahma-Saraswathi relationship takes place strictly within the philosophical bounds of patriarchy. Brahma himself is shown as the source of wisdom in the Vedas, the early Brahmin writings, which were designed to subordinate the native masses of India. The Vedas themselves express the mixed feelings of crude Brahmanism. But since they were written by the Brahmins (i.e. by the early literate Aryans), the texts go against Dalitbahujans. In fact, they are anti-Dalitbahujan texts. The absurdity of Brahmin patriarchy is clear in these texts. **The source of Education, Saraswati, did not write any book as the Brahmins never allowed women to write their texts. Nowhere does she speak even about the need to give education to women. How is it that the source of education is herself an illiterate woman?** This is diabolism of the highest order. Brahmanism never allowed women to be educated. The first woman who worked to provide education for all women is Savitribai Phule, wife of Mahatma Phule, in the mid-nineteenth century. To our Dalitbahujan mind, there is no way in which Saraswati can be compared to Savitribai Phule. In Savitribai Phule, one finds real feminist assertion. ..." [Kancha: 1996: 75]

He further observes:

"... She (Saraswati) herself remains a tool in the hands of Brahma. She becomes delicate because Brahma wants her to be delicate. She is portrayed as an expert in the strictly defined female activities of serving Brahma or playing the veena - always to amuse Brahma. Brahma is never said to have looked after cattle, or driven a plough; similarly, Saraswathi

never tends the crops, plants the seed or weeds the fields. She is said to have become so delicate that she could stand on a lotus flower. She could travel on a *hansa* (a swan, a delicate bird). This kind of delicateness is a negative delicateness. It only shows that her alienation from nature is total. In order to live this alienated but luxurious life, Brahmins have built up an oppressive culture. That oppressive culture was sought to be made universally acceptable. [Kancha :1996 :76]

Duties of Brahmins after education

After education, their main task involved in seeing that nobody transgress the caste rules, no widow gets remarried, see that all girls married before puberty, and generally nobody transgresses the caste. If anybody did transgress these rules, then this product of gurukul was to sit as the judge to punish the guilty by excommunication and ordeals and things like that, so that supremacy of Brahmin is maintained and the divinely ordained system of chaturvarna works smoothly to the advantage of some and peril to the rest.

Knowledge of Brahmins at the time of arrival of the British

If anybody has any doubt about the standard of education of gurukuls and has any wrong ideas, he better see what is recorded about the knowledge of Brahmins at time of Britishers' arrival. The Brahmins of Poona thought, their town was the whole world. They never tried to find out who were the British and from where they have come here. The believed that Calcutta was in England and England was in Calcutta. Any knowledge except Sanskrit was considered as a gate way to Hell. They honestly believed that Indra tells the cloud to pour down the rain. The clouds are the elephants of Indra and on his order they make rain. Poona was such a dark valley of ignorance.[MF- p.8] Such was the knowledge of scholars. The modern stories of intelligence of Birbal, Tenali Ram, and Nana Fadnavis are all fables, fabricated to stress upon the masses the false merit of Brahmin scholars over the royal princes.

Guru as God

It is true that Guru was elevated to the status of God. There are mantras chanted by Brahmins that guru is Brahma, guru is Vishnu, guru is Maheshvara, guru is real supreme godhead, to whom everybody must bow. So we find Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva, supreme divine trinity of post

Vedic puranik gods to be of same status as guru. But that is not all. This mantra has to be remembered along with another sastrik injunction, that "Brahmin is the guru of all varnas" (*varnanam brahmano guru*). Brahmin saint Ramdas did not forget to mention this in Marathi also, *guru to sakalancha brahman*. A hindu is not supposed to take any instructions from anybody else other than Brahmin. This equates not the teacher with god but a Brahmin with god. And sure enough, they are called 'bhudevas' - gods on the earth.

If there were any prerequisites of such respect by the society for the gurus, like good conduct etc., then perhaps this could have been tolerable, but that is not so. That the Brahmin, even if becomes corrupt, he is still to be respected as supreme within the three worlds, as is pronounced by a Marathi Brahmin saint of seventeenth century, Saint Ramdas, in his religio-socio-political treatise - "Dasbodha". He also avers that Brahmin is guru of all; though he becomes inactive is still to be worshipped and that if an 'antyaja', (i.e. todays SCs, STs) becomes learned, still he is useless.

At the time of Mahatma Jotirao Phule, his bitter critic was Vishnu Sastri Chipalunkar - the so called 'the Shivaji of Marathi language'. It is reported about him that, he thought country means not people, but its land, language, hindu traditions and history of famous people. The pride of these was patriotism for him. His writings were miles away from reality and rationalism. [MF p. 166] He abused Phule by calling him 'shudra jagatguru', 'shudra poet', 'shudra dharma sansthapak' and said Phule 'barks' against Brahmins. [MF p. 168] He said Brahmins may be cunning and cruel, but one thing is sure, the keys of store house of knowledge are in their waist, and without these keys no other castes can be educated.[MF p.169] He repeated old sastric injunction in an arrogant manner, that the world is under control of gods, the gods are under the control of mantras, and mantras are sole property of Brahmins, so Brahmins are the gods on earth.

During British times, some Europeans became College Professors and were teaching the Indian students, most, if not all, of them were Brahmins. This equation of gurus with god became quite intolerable to the Brahmins of the time, which made Shivaram Mahadev Paranjape, a learned Brahmin of Maharashtra, to pronounce that, '*he aamache guru ch navhet*" - "these people are not our gurus at all".

Women had no right to education

As explained above, since long, women are not allowed any education in Brahmanic system. Some scholars are at pains to tell us that, originally, women also took education. They point out the names of Maitereyi and Gargee in Vedic times. No doubt, there was a time, the *sanskara* of *Upnayana* was allowed to women. **The more important point is when was it stopped and why.** Perhaps Manu Smriti could provide an answer, when it enjoined that women should be under care of father, husband or son and never independent. And also that the father who does not marry his daughter before age of eight, goes to hell. Why were these restrictions put? Just for weaning them away from Buddhism. On the contrary, women were educated in Buddhist centers till quite late. You can see a painting of about sixth or seventh century, in Ajanta, where a girl is sitting in front of a teacher along with boys.

There should be no women teachers

When no teacher was available for Phule's school, Sawitribai got educated and became the first woman teacher in India after about two thousand years. Altekar tells us women teachers were not seen in India, since beginning of Christian Era. [Altekar A.S., quoted MF p. 31] Today a woman can become a teacher, thanks to the British, but still she can not be a vedic teacher. Even in modern times a shankaracharya proclaims that women should not utter the vedic hymns. The reason he gave was not religious; perhaps he was too shy of giving a religious reason in this modern times. But the reason he gave was a biological one. He said that chanting of Vedic hymns would damage the female reproductive organs. Most astounding reason ever heard of. Medical fraternity of India is second biggest in the world, but nobody seems to have taken note of this new etiological factor in diseases of female anatomy, and commented on this. Very very scientific attitude indeed.

Creation of Illiteracy

Present India is illiterate, no doubt about it. But it was not so all the time. When Aryans were savages, there was an urban Dravidian civilization in India, the Harrapan Civilization, and they had their own script.

Ashokan edicts are scattered all over India. They are written in Prakrit language, not in Sanskrit. It shows the language of people was Prakrit. As

a matter of fact Sanskrit was not spoken anywhere, any time. It was an artificial language only meant for writing. Even in South India, the most ancient inscriptions are in Prakrit. Sanskrit inscriptions came later on. The mere presence of Ashokan Edicts denotes that Ashokan India was literate India. Historians believe that a great percentage of common people in Mauryan period were literate, who could read these edicts, which were meant for common people. Otherwise, there was no sense in spending so much amount in inscribing the edicts and inscriptions on rock, pillar and caves. Dr. Vincent Smith is of the opinion that, "literacy in those days was higher than many provinces of the British regime." [Indian History- p.134]

Nagesh Chaudhari, a prominent OBC scholar and editor of "Bahujan Sangharsha", on the authority of A. S. Altekar, mentions that the literacy rate during Ashoka's times was sixty percent. ['*Prabuddha Bharat*', 30.4.2000]

India is supposed to have largest number of illiterates in the world. Many institutions are fed on State revenue for the 'noble' cause of so called 'adult' literacy. But nobody tells us why India remained illiterate for centuries. It was Dr. Ambedkar who brought this fact in light. [W&S, vol 3, p.41] He averred that, without formal education the accumulated thought and experience relating to a subject can not learned by a student and he will not get new perception and his horizon will not widen. This requires schools, books and planned materials and literacy. Formal education was confined study of to Vedas alone, in schools only for Brahmins, as they propagated that there was no knowledge outside Vedas. Education of rest was neglected by the state. Children of vaishyas learned rudiments of business geography and arithmetic from fathers in course of business, and so did the shudra craftsmen from their parents. This education was domestic and practical. Due to this illiteracy became inherent part of Hindus. Manu and others made laws to this effect. Those who had right to study the Vedas had right to read and write, others were deprived of this right. So according to laws of Manu, reading and writing has become the right of few high caste men and illiteracy has become the destiny of low caste multitudes. This is how literacy was prohibited and general ignorance prevailed among the masses.

Such is the system of Gurukuls. It is very surprising and sad that, there are still in this age, some learned supporters of this system, which needs to be condemned out rightly.

Why such a love for gurukuls

The question arises, why there should be affinity in the minds of people for such gurukuls, which do not as a matter of fact exist today, except for a few attempts scattered in various states to revive Brahmanic schools, where English also is taught, so also modern archery but no science. Either it could be due to ignorance of exact nature of such gurukuls in the past and as a blanket glorification of everything that is ancient, or it may be a purposeful mischievous planed strategic tactic and a wily trick to promote Brahmin supremacy on the gullible 'masses' by the learned and knowledgeable 'classes'.

The other reason could be the natural desire from nationalistic standpoint and thought that Brahmin culture of ancient India was the only culture available and we must glorify it, may be it was good or bad.

India a land of Hindus, Is it?

There is a feeling in the minds of many, that India is and was a Hindu country having always had a majority of Hindus. This again is a misconception. In historical times the population of India was never in majority of Hindus. Swami Vivekananda, [L.M.Joshi, Studies in Buddhistic culture, p. 358] estimated Buddhist to be two thirds of population and Dr. Ambedkar [Anihil. castes. p. 146] says Buddhist were in majority. Then there were Jains and Veerashaivas and Tribal religions in addition to Muslims, Sikhs and Christians. So taking Hinduism(Brahminism) as religious faith, they were neither the most ancient nor the most numerous. If one considers Hindu not as religion but as geographical entity like as Hindu comes from pronunciation of Sindhu, then also one has to consider others as a part of, and rightful owners of, this land, irrespective of their religious faith. And Hindu or Aryan as cultural entity has a very poor claim and one could not accept the conditionality of respect for Rama and Krishna etc. as a precondition of nationality, as Gail Omvedt very rightly analyses the situation and comments:

"In other words, the construction of Hinduism(Brahminism) as achieved by the Hindu-nationalists and accepted in various forms by many supposed secularists as well, rests on a trick: conflating the two contradictory definitions of a broad, territorial, pluralistic, historical identity with a

religious culture that continues to give dominance to an Aryan / Vedic / Sanskritic / Brahmanic core." [Dalit visions p.95]

Dr. Ambedkar very rightly said:

"It must be recognized that there never has been a common Indian Culture, that historically there have been three Indias, Brahmanic India, Buddhist India and Hindu India, each with its own culture. ... It must be recognized that the history of India before the Muslim invasions is the history of a mortal conflict between Brahmanism and Buddhism." [W&S,3,275]

Buddhist Educational System

This brings us to another question. What was the Educational system of Buddhists. Buddhists had their own educational system and was entirely based on different principles. Buddhists never believed in caste distinctions, they believed in equality of all men, they believed in equal status to women. Even during the decline of Buddhism, the education system continued through the Vajrayani Siddhas. The students used to utter 'om namao siddam' at the start of their studies. The present 'ganeshay namah' is quite recent. The remnant of this system of Siddhas, the word 'onama' meaning 'beginning' - a corrupted form of 'om namah siddham' - still exists in Marathi language.

To understand the difference between Brahmanic and Buddhist methods of education is a crucial point which should not be missed if one wants to realize the implications of the education system in Indian Society. The ancient India was known all over the world for Buddhist Education, not Brahmanic.

Brahmanic education was essentially a single individual teacher with his small group of disciples and pupils at his residence. One teacher was teaching all the subjects, and there was no specialization. On the other hand, Buddhist system is institutional i.e. monastic. This difference is significant, leading to different lines of evolution. Prof. Mookerji says:

"The necessity of a domestic environment in the Brahmanical system did not favour the expansion of a small school under an individual teacher into a large educational federation, controlled by a collective body of

teachers, as was the characteristic of the Buddhist system." [Ancient Indian Education, p. 460, quoted in Bapat:1997:156]

It gave birth to those large scale monastic universities, with thousands of teachers and students, and attracted students from all over Asia. Evolution which continued for more than fifteen hundred years culminated in establishing Universities like Nalanda, Vallabhi, Vikramsila, Jagaddala, Odantpuri etc. [S. Dutta, in Bapat:1997: 157] Though these universities started as training grounds for monks, did not remain places for cloistered meditation but developed into seats of culture and learning and remained so till got destroyed by Muslim invasions. [S. Dutta, in Bapat:1997:157]

Those were the times, without any books, all teaching was imparted by word of mouth. Books came not before first century B.C. Students had to learn by heart Dhamma and Vinaya, and at the end of learning there used to be a ceremony of *Paravarna*, on the last day of *varsavas*. [Bapat:1997:157] The remnants of this Buddhist practice, remains even now in the form of "Kojagiri" in Maharashtra and by other names in other areas like "Pujagiri" in Bengal.

During the course, there was unrestricted freedom to argue, to dispute, and debate and each was expected to think reason and decide for himself all matters of Vinaya and Dhamma, [Bapat:1997:160] the facility, presumably was absent in gurukuls.

The subjects were not only Dhamma and Vinaya but they were trained in e varied cultural subjects, in the tenets of other faith, in systems of philosophy, and even the subjects of pragmatic importance like Agriculture and Architecture. Afterwards, when books began to be written, these centers developed huge splendid manuscript libraries. [Bapat:1997:161]

We have seen in gurukuls, admission was based on basis of caste, reserved only to all *dwijas* technically, but only to Brahmins in practice, because in Kali yuga, there were only two varnas, Brahmins and Shudras, and the last Kshatriya kula was that of Nandas, because they did not want to recognize the Mauryas as Kshatriyas. In Brahmanic Gurukuls, the course content differed according to caste of the pupil. In contrast, we also know that people of all castes were admitted to Buddhist Sangha, and in Buddhist centers of learning, the admission was open not only to

monks of different Buddhist sects but, also to unordained seekers of knowledge and learning, even to non-Buddhists, irrespective of caste and sect, religious denomination or nationality. [Bapat: 1997: 161,170]

It is also worth noting that the system of education was totally free and for the benefit of residence and learning in a monastery, there could of course be no question of payment. The monasteries were maintained by grants from princes and people alike as an act of spiritual merit.[Bapat:1997:162]

Present Situation of Education

A few words about present situation may not be out of place. There is total negligence towards Primary Education. Even where the Rulers are OBCs, they are so much under the mental Slavery of Brahmanism, that as one OBC scholar puts it, they have the Brahmanic head over their trunk. There is a notable exception of Laloo Prasad Yadav, the Chief Minister of Bihar, who is highly maligned by media. He introduced what are known as "*Charavaha Schools*", the "cowherds schools", where teachers are sent to the cattle grazing grounds and teach the boys tending the cattle there. Brahmanic media has not focussed enough attention on these attempts of new and revolutionary approach.

When, this year, the Government of Maharashtra introduced English as one of the subjects from Class I, in Primary schools, there was a hue and cry in Brahmanic Press, being afraid of coming competition from these municipal schools products in future. As a matter of fact, the time has come, in spite of total Brahmanical opposition, to introduce English as a medium of Instruction right from Pre-Primary classes upto the highest level. The regional language medium should be stopped immediately and replaced by English. It would help lower strata of society, and encourage national integration.

Recommendations made by Mahatma Phule to Hunter's Education Commission in 1882, are relevant still today. He emphasized the need for education to be compulsory and free, at least, upto 12 years of age for all castes. He had recommended more funds for Primary education for backward castes rather than higher education to upper castes. He demanded the higher education be brought within the reach of poor

classes, and books be published as Govt. Gazettes. [Y. D. Phadke: 1991: 233 ff.] A few excerpts:

"... providing ampler funds for higher education tended to educate Brahmins and the higher classes only, and to leave the masses wallowing in ignorance and poverty. ..."

He wanted teachers from masses as he says:

"The teachers now employed in the primary schools are almost all Brahmins ... as a rule they are all unpractical men ... I think teachers for primary schools should be trained, as far as possible, out of the cultivating classes, who will be able to mix freely with them and understand their wants and wishes much better than a Brahmin teacher, who generally holds himself aloof under religious prejudices. ..."

He felt Govt. should not hand over the educational institutes to private NGOs:

"The withdrawal of Government from schools or colleges would not only tend to check the spread of education, but would seriously endanger that spirit of neutrality which has all along been the aim of Government to foster, owing to the different nationalities and religious creeds prevalent in India. ..."

He felt the Govt. scholarships now encourage those who are already ahead in education, and felt:

"some of these scholarships should be awarded to such classes amongst whom education has made no progress."

Chapter 7

SATI WAS STARTED FOR PRESERVING CASTE

Why discuss Sati?

With the much discussed subject, now in India, about a so called "sati" of Charanshah, in village Satpura in Uttar Pradesh, some information about this evil in Hindu social system, may be not only informative but also educative to the masses who wish to build a new India on new values.

Condition of Widows in ancient India

In India, the condition of women in general, was made more dreadful than that of a slave, but the lot of widows was always very hard and they were forced to lead a horrible life of torture, disfigurement, tonsure and deprivation, with an enforced strict ban on remarriage. They were compelled to undergo sex with other men for procreation under the system of Niyoga. As if this was not enough, a peculiar system existed in India, whereby widows were burnt alive on the funeral pyre of their dead husbands. The practice existed among the higher castes mainly, though it was given a honorable and prestigious outlook among the masses by various means adopted by the Brahmins.

Why this system started in India? It was for maintaining the caste, which was very important for the welfare of those, who are benefited by it. And as the caste system grew more rigid, the sati become more strict. Notable example is Bengal, where it was enforced more strictly because of "Kulin system", where any of the hundreds of disgruntled young wives could easily poison the old man.

Position of women

Ms. Shakuntala Rao Shastri, in her "Women in Sacred Laws" very aptly describes the pitiable condition of women before the Britishers came to India:

"True it is that anyone who has witnessed the pathetic condition of women in India at the dawn of British rule cannot but be shocked at it: the enforced child marriage, the exposure of female children, putting to death female children by throwing them at the junction of the Ganges and the sea, the violence used to

make women follow the Sati rite and thus end their miserable existence, the shameful treatment accorded to a widow, the (in)famous kulinism which made marriage a profession rather than a sacrament, made woman not only an object of pity but many a woman sighed in the secret recess for her heart and wished that she had never been born a woman in this unfortunate country." [Shastri: 1959: 171]

The situation described by the learned Vedic Scholar is at the time of dawn of British occupation, but since how long it was in existence? The reply is that this was the situation since the fall of Buddhism around tenth century A.D. That the women enjoyed high position in Buddhist period can be judged by a mere glance at the Buddhist law being practiced in India before tenth century A.D. and which is practiced in all the Buddhist countries even now.

Today after passing of Ambedkar's Hindu Code, piece meal, the Hindu Laws of Marriage, Adoption, Succession, and other related Laws have been changed to a great extent. But prior to 1956, the Old Hindu Brahmanic Law was in force, under which the condition of women was pitiable. To get some idea of how these laws were made more and more cruel is seen if one considers that original law of India was Buddhist Law. **Buddhist law was the national law of India, because from the historical period, the religion of India was Buddhism. It was the main stream.** The Brahmins succeeded in causing the fall of Buddhism, at the cost of women and Shudras. They had to bear the brunt of all evils, to maintain the supremacy of the Brahmins.

The Buddhist personal Laws about Women

To get some idea of what was The Buddhist Personal Law, we quote from Ms. Shastri.

"In Buddhist Law, the position of women was different. The religion was more practical and elastic as well as highly ethical due to the eight principles of life enjoined on each man: (1) Right Understanding; (2) Right mindedness; (3) Right speech; (4) Right Action; (5) Right livelihood; (6) Right endeavor; (7) Right concentration; (8) Right collectedness.

"In Buddhism every human being - man or woman - is a free agent able to work out his own salvation independent of any supernatural agency or the medium of priests or rituals. The inequality between man and woman is wiped

out. Hence woman in the Buddhist Law has a special place.

"Buddhist marriage is a simple ceremony it is purely a civil contract.

"The age at which a girl is allowed independent choice is twenty. If a girl contracts a marriage before this period without the consent, expressed or implicit, of her guardians or parents, it is null and void. This rule is not binding on widows and divorcees as their first marriage has already freed them from paternal control.

"Polygamy is allowed in Buddhist Law. A man can marry a second time during the lifetime of the first wife; but a woman has not a similar choice. Wives of inferior status, who can however inherit the property of their husband, are mentioned and Buddhist Law speaks of them as 'wives and concubines'. Concubines have a legal status and can inherit property, hence illegitimacy of children is avoided.

"Women have the same rights of inheritance as men. On marriage the couple have a joint interest on their estate, each keeping his or her share separate. All property acquired or inherited comes under joint property. Both husband and wife get equal share of interest. But where property is the contribution of one party only, the contributor gets two-third share and the other one-third.

"Divorce is permissible by mutual consent under Buddhist Law. When one party contracts some incurable disease, such as leprosy, divorce is immediately granted.

"In these cases each is entitled to one half of the interest in property. If one deserts the other, divorce is automatic and the deserting party forfeits all rights to inherit property but is liable to pay off the joint debts if any.

"If the husband becomes a priest against the wishes of his wife and remains as such for seven days, the wife inherits the entire property and to pay off also their joint debts, To sell or mortgage a joint property, the consent of the wife is obligatory. Neither party can act independently. A woman has the right to adopt under Buddhist Law she might adopt for inheritance or out of pity; girls are not barred from adoption.

"These laws still survive in Buddhist countries like Burma, Indochina, Japan and Ceylon, But it must be said that at one time when Buddhism was a living religion in India, they influenced, not to a small extent, Hindu culture and the

legal literature, Kautlilya admits divorce by mutual consent as did the Buddhists. [The Bombay Law Reporter, Vol. 38, p. 14, quoted by Shastri: 1959: 7]

As this comes from a scholar, who is a strong supporter of Brahmanic Laws and visibly biased against Buddhism as she blames Buddhists for every thing at every conceivable opportunity even applying a wrong logic, it is more important. **Sati, enforced widowhood and girl child marriage along with prohibition of education of women and reduction of age of marriage of women are the various points so inter-related that they must be discussed together.** But leaving the question of position of women in general for some future occasion, we would like now to deal only with one aspect of this broad subject in this article, that is the prevalence of Sati.

Efforts to stop Sati

Saint Raidas, a chamaar by caste, and guru of Saint Meerabai of Rajputana was the first person to oppose Sati, says P. S. Changole. ['*Prabuddha Bharat*', 30.4.2000] All the Rajput rulers, the pseudo-Kshatriyas always eulogized the practice of Sati under the Brahmanic domination, but many Muslim and Christian rulers had attempted to stop the practice of Sati. During Portuguese rule in Goa, in 1508 A.D., Albuquirk declared it as a crime. Akbar was against use of force to stop it, but he had declared it a crime punishable by death penalty, and he had also rode 450 miles to save the queen of Jodhpur just a few steps away from pyre. Jehangir had proclaimed death penalty for those putting a widow in funeral pyre of her dead husband with force. Aurangjeb had declared that no woman would be allowed to be burnt alive. But nobody among the Hindus except Raja Rammohan Roy tried to end this infamous custom. [Nag: 1972: 44] Raja had undertaken this onerous task after the flames of Sati had engulfed his own family members.

The Raja used to be abused by his own kith and kin as a "Muslim", when he tried to prevent a widow burning. His opponents were Radhakant Deo, Pundit Kalanand Banerjee, Pundit Nimai Mukhopadyaya, Harihar Shastri, Darmapati Ganguli etc. They submitted memoranda to the Governor General to expel Fr. William Kerry and Fr. William Sliman, who were opposing sati. **Their argument against the missionaries was that the missionaries are awakening public opinion against sati and thereby destroying Hinduism(Brahminism).** [Francis D'Souza, *Loksatta*, 3.12.99]

But thanks to Raja's persistent efforts, it was eventually banned by Lord Bentik, the then Governor General of East India Co. in November 1829, and it became a Law on 4th December 1929. The appeal against this by the *"Dharma Sabha"*, an organization of *savarnas* came before the Privy Council in July 1832 and the judges unanimously advised the Emperor to reject it. [Nag: 1972: 55] Interestingly the **appellants had argued that if Sati is prohibited the women would kill their husbands.**

Though for nearly hundred and seventy five years, the Act is in force, still the Sati is not completely stopped. Rupakuwanrs are still getting burnt. Not only that but there are important personalities supporting the act of burning the widows alive. This includes a prominent political leader and a widow queen Vijaya Raje Scindia, who did not practice it herself. Even leaders talking in favour of women's Reservation movement, like Sadhwi Ritumbhara, Uma Bharati, and Sushama Swaraj have supported the sati system. [Jyoti Lanjewar, *Lokmat*, 2.12.99]

Sita Agrawal tells us VHP Acharya Giriraj Kishore stating that there is nothing wrong if any woman who cannot bear the separation from her husband opts to join him in his funeral pyre, and Dharmendra Maharaj of Jaipur, the priest who presided over the ritual of self-immolation committed by Roop Kanwar upon the death of her husband in Rajasthan is the president of the Sansad`s Kendriya Margadarshan Samiti, the steering committee of the religious parliament. [Revive] Those women who do not commit sati are often forced into `reservations' where only widows live. One such place is Vrindavan [Roy]. Tonsuring of the head was forced on widows, thereby disfiguring them and they were forbidden to appear in auspicious functions, as per Puranic injunctions. Mahatma Phule, as is well known, had to arrange a "Barbers' Strike" to oppose the system. It is also well known that he opened "Bal hattya pratibandha griha", house for prevention of infanticide, for widows.

Sati in Vedas

Let us start tracing the origin of this practice. Rig Veda X.18.7 states:

"Let these women, whose husbands are worthy and are living, enter the house with ghee (applied) as corrylium (to their eyes). Let these wives first step into the pyre, tearless without any affliction and well adorned." [Rig Veda X.18.7] [Kane 199-200] quoted by Sita Agrawal, "Genocide of Women in Hinduism(Brahminism)", Sati - Brahmin Annihilation of Widows, Chapter 5,

(http:// dalitstan.org/ books/ gowh/ gowh5.html]

On this verse Sita Agrawal, who firmly believes that Vedic Aryans practiced Sati, comments that in recent times some Aryan apologists try to prove that this verse does not sanction sati, on a mistaken reading of the word *agne* or *agneh* , which they believe is *agre* . She believes it to be a wrong interpretation, and fabrication to distort the Sati verse which directs the widow to enter the pyre (agneh) so as to mean that the wife was to rise from her pyre and go to the front (agre).

In support she mentions other citations from scriptures which explicitly allow Sati:

1. The Garudapurana favourably mentioning sati for women of all castes, even the Chandala woman, with the only exceptions of pregnant women or those who have young children. [Garuda Purana. II.4.91-100] [Kane 237].

2. Several of Krishna's wives performed sati upon his death, including Rukmini, Rohini, Devaki, Bhadraa and Madura [Mah.Bhar. Mausalaparvan 7.18] [Alld, p.977, 1018-1019: Rukmini]

3. Madri, second wife of Pandu, considered an incarnation of the goddess Dhriti, performed sati [Mah.Bhar. Adiparvan 95.65] [Alld, p.985]

4. Rohini, a wife of Vasudev, Krishna's father, who gave birth to Balram (Devki's child), later became a sati. [Alld.1018] The Vishnu Purana V.38 refers to this mass burning of Krishna's wives :

"The 8 queens of Krishna, who have been named, with Rukmini at their head, embraced the body of Hari, and entered the funeral fire. Revati also embracing the corpse of Rama, entered the blazing pile, which was cool to her, happy in contact with her lord. Hearing these events, Ugrasena and Anakadundubhi, with Devaki and Rohini, committed themselves to the flames." [Vis.Pur. 5.38] [Vis.Pur. {Wils} p.481]

However, we feel Sita Agrawal's citation of Puranas and Mahabharata can not prove that Rig Vedic Aryans did practice Sati, as these are much later creations. We tend to agree more with Ms. Shakuntala Rao Shastri who quotes Kaegi saying:

"The well known custom of burning of widows for thousands of years

demanded by the Brahmins - is nowhere evidenced in the Rig-Veda; only by palpable falsification of a hymn has the existence of the custom been forcibly put into the texts which, on the contrary, prove directly the opposite - the return of the widow from her husband's corpse into a happy life and her remarriage" [Kaegi - "The Rig Veda", p.16, quoted by Shastri: 1959: 172]

Sati in Atharva Veda

There are scholars who believe, Atharva Veda is more ancient than Rig, and represents Indigenous people, but Brahmins maintain the importance of Rig Veda as original book of Aryans. Shakuntala Rao Shastri tells us the name Atharva Veda is not found before the Sutra period. [Shastri:1956:39, Vedic Index, vol. I, 18] It represents the life of another branch of Aryans who came to India later. [Shastri: 1956: 58] It was the literature of a different stock of Aryan family, who were influenced by Iranian culture and who entered India later than the Rig Vedic group. [Shastri: 1956: 62] Here the mention is found for widowhood in one of the later books dealing with funeral ceremonies. [Shastri:1956:53] Out of the two verses about widows, one refers to custom of widow lying beside her dead husband on pyre and the following verse describes the maiden being led forth for the dead. It is clear that burning of widow was prevalent in Atharva-Vedic cult, but '**became almost extinct and was observed only as a show.**' [Shastri: 1956: 54]

Time of Origin of Sati

"It may now be asked, when and how this custom of the self- annihilation of windows on the funeral pyre of their husbands technically called by the name of Anumarana then, and later the 'Sati rite', came to be introduced and enforced in India? The available evidence shows that the custom was entirely nonexistent in early Hindu society.

"The Vedic practice was for a widow to marry her dead husband's younger brother. In the sutra period she was allowed to marry any near kinsman; in the earliest Dharmasutra (Gautama) without enjoining any restriction and in the later (Baudhayana and Vasishtha) enjoining ascetic practices for a short period only. Later on, however this asceticism alone remained and became life long. This was the characteristic of the period ranging between the 2nd century B.C. and the 4th century A.D., when the Smritis of Manu and Yajnavalkya were compiled. But there is absolutely no mention of widow burning. Later on, however, we find Anumarana prescribed for a widow as an

alternative to life long asceticism.

"This is clear even from a superficial study of the Vishnu and the Brihaspati Smritis, which were put together between the 5th and the 9th centuries. A. D. Hindu society was completely revolutionized soon after this, and we find new Smritis and new commentaries springing up and holding up the ideal thing for a widow in comparison with life-long asceticism. This last is no doubt mentioned by them, but only incidentally.

"On the other hand, this practice was exceedingly eulogized and celestial felicity of the highest type was promised to the widow who immolated herself. In fact, she was believed to raise her dead husband even from hell and make him a participant of her heavenly bliss. The period between the 5th 9th centuries was a period of transition. The practice of Anumarana was, no doubt, gaining ascendancy, but authors and scholars were not wanting who condemned it." [Shastri : 1959 : 124]

Brahmanic Authors opposing Sati

Perhaps the first author opposing the practice was poet Banabhatta, who flourished earlier than Medhatithi in the 7th century A.D and was protege of Harshavardhana, the last Buddhist Emperor prior to Palas. His view on the subject have been embodied in a characteristic passage of the "Kadambari". He thought that:

"This practice which is called Anumarana is utterly fruitless. This is a path followed by the illiterate this is manifestation of infatuation, this is a course of ignorance, this is an art of foolhardiness, this is short-sightedness, this is stumbling through stupidity, viz. that life is put and end to when a parent, brother, friend, of husband is dead. Life should not be ended, if it does not leave one of itself. ..." [Kadambari: Edited by Kashinath Pandurang Parab, Nirnaysagar Press, 1890, purva-bhag, pp.339-9, quoted by Shastri]

The another such author was Medhatithi, who was, however, a schooliast and probably belonged to one school of Law. About him it is said:

"Medhatithi did not look upon Anumarana, or the self- immolation of windows, as a Dharma or meritorious act at all, and tolerated it only as a transgression in times of distress. On the other hand, Vijnanesvara and Madhavacharya regarded Anumarana as a Dharma and not as an act of suicide. Hence they

argued that the suicide prohibited by the sruti text was to be considered suicide in all cases, except in that of self-destruction by a widow. The whole mental vision thus seems to have changed between the times when Medhatithi and Vijnanesvara respectively wrote, that is, between the 9th and the 11th centuries. [Shastri : 1959 : 124]

In the law-codes, however, it is the **Vishnu Smriti that sanctions widow-burning for the first time in the religious and legal literature of India.** The Vishnu Smriti has been supposed to have been complied soon after the 5th century A.D [Shastri : 1959 : 128 ff.] Thus Sati was legalised after decline of Buddhism started, and was gradually imposed harshly in later periods.

The earliest recorded instance of Sati

The earliest known case is recorded by Diodorus, about a soldier from India who died in Iran and his two wives vied with each other to get burnt alive on his funeral pyre.

"... In the year 316 B.C., the leader of an contingent which had gone to fight under Eumenes in Iran was killed in battle. He had with him his two wives. There was immediately a competition between them as to which was to be the sati. The question was brought before the Macedonian and Greek generals, and they decided in favour of the younger, the elder being with child. At this the elder woman went away lamenting, with the band about her head rent, and tearing her hair as if tidings of some great disaster has been brought her; and the other departed, exultant at her victory, to the pyre crowned with fillets by the women who belonged to her and decked out splendidly as for a wedding. She was escorted by her kinsfolk who chanted a song in praise of her virtue. When she came near to the pyre, she took off her adornments and distributed them to her familiars and friends, leaving a memorial of herself, as it were, to those who has loved her. Her adornments consisted of a multitude of rings on her hands set with precious gems of diverse colours, and about her neck a multitude of necklaces, each a little larger than one above it. In conclusion, she said farewell to her familiars and was helped by her brother onto the pyre, and there to the admiration of the crowd which had gathered together for the spectacle she ended her life in heroic fashion. Before the pyre was kindled, the whole army in battle array marched round it thrice, she meanwhile lay down beside her husband, and as the fire seized her no sound of weakness escaped her lips. The spectators were moved, some to pity and some to exuberant praise. But some of the Greeks present found fault with

such customs as savage and inhumane. The Greeks, we find, had a theory to account for the custom, whether of their own invention or suggested to them by Indian informants we cannot say. The theory was that once upon a time wives had been so apt to get rid of their husbands by poison that the law had to be introduced which compelled a widow to be burnt with her dead husband." [Beven:1968:372]

Epigraphic evidences of Sati

Ms. Shakuntala Rao Shastri describes the "Memorial stelae". They are small stone uprights sculptured with figures and inscriptions, and are called *Devli*, and are found in abundance in Rajputana. They are erected in commemoration of women immolating themselves on funeral pyres of their husbands. **The earliest one found in Jodhpur state at Gatiyala is dated 890 A.D. The earliest of these stelae is found in Eran in Sagar District in M.P. and is dated 510 A. D.** Thus the practice of Sati was coming to vogue in sixth century A.D. [Shastri:1959:130]

The Annals of Kashmir by Kallahna of 12th century, mentions some instances where, in addition to wife / wives others like concubines, slaves, mother nurse, friends and followers also practiced Anumaran. Earliest mentioned was in 902 A.D. King Samkaravarman, in 1081 A.D. King Ananta, in 1161 A.D. King Malla, and the last one mentioned was in 12th century of King Sussala. [Shastri: 1959:130]

Not only it was practiced in North, West and Central India, the examples of Inscriptions from Epigraphica Carnataka show that the custom existed in South India also. Anumarana was practiced after deaths of various kings like - in 1130 A.D. Kadamba King Tailapa, Ganga King Nitimarga, and Satyavakya Kongunivarman Lord of Nandagiri, both of whom lived in 915 A.D., in 1220 A.D. King Ballala, and in 1180 King Bammarasa. [Shastri: 1959: 132 ff.]

When a Tomar King in Gujrath died, his 90,000 queens were requested not to commit sati. They consulted their Kula-brahmana, who advised them to commit sati as Veda verse 18/877 mentions "Agne" and not "Agre", just for the sake of golden coins, thus condemning these 90,000 women to flames. 3000 queens committed sati with king of Vijaynagar. On conquest of Jaselmere by Muslims, 24 thousand queens committed sati. Old cremation place has got inscriptions mentioning names of those committing sati. 112 queens of king Amarsing of Bundi, 88 queens of Keshosing, Jagirdar of Dharampur, 78

queens of Surendrasing of Palitana. Some social reformists tried to prevent sati of 95 queens of Bharatpur, but they had to commit sati. [Francis D'Souza, Loksatta, 3.12.99]

Travellers' Accounts

Many travellers from Al Biruni to Abbe DuBois mention the practice, the account of Travernier is most illuminating. French traveller Jean-Baptiste Tavernier, a jeweller by profession, visited India 6 times between 1641 and 1667 for gem trade. All his writings display a marked admiration for India without any inherent religious bias. His description apart from being gory and horrible, also depicts greed of Brahmins:

"The Brahmans accompanying her [the Sati] exhort her to show resolution and courage, and many Europeans believe that in order to remove the fear of that death which man naturally abhors, she is given some kind of drink that takes away her senses and removes all apprehensions which the preparations for her (p.165) death might occasion. **It is for the interest of the Brahmans that these unhappy women maintain the resolution they have taken to burn themselves, for all the bracelets which they wear, both in arms and legs, with their earrings and rings, belong of right to the Brahmans, who search for them in the ashes after the women are burnt.** [Tavernier, Vol.II, p.164-165, Quoted by Sita Agrawal]

These heart-rending descriptions taken directly from Tavernier's Travels, Ms. Agrawal believes, prove that it was the Brahmins who enforced Sati upon the non-Brahmin races in order to exterminate them and to steal their wealth. It must be remembered, she says, that Brahmins had infiltrated the Mughal administration, and continued Sati despite prohibitory orders from Mughal kings. She quotes Tavernier further:

"I have seen women burnt in three different ways, according to the customs of different countries. In the kingdom of Gujarat; and as far as Agra and Delhi, this is how it takes place : On the margin of a river or tank, a kind of small hut, about 12 feet square, is built of reeds and all kinds of faggots, with which some pots of oil and other drugs are placed in order to make it burn quickly. The woman is seated in a half-reclining position in the middle of the hut, her head reposes on a kind of pillow of wood, and she rests her back against **a post, to which she is tied by her waist by one of the Brahmans, for fear lest she should escape on feeling the flame** . In this position she holds the

dead body of her husband on her knees, chewing betel all the time; and after having been about half an hour in this condition, the Brahman who has been by her side in the hut goes outside, and she calls out to the priests to apply the fire; this the Brahmans, and the relatives and friends of the woman who are present immediately do, throwing into the fire some pots of oil, so that the woman may suffer less by being quickly consumed.

"After the bodies have been reduced to ashes, **the Brahmans take whatever may be found in the way of melted fold, silver, tin, or copper, derived from the bracelets, earrings, and rings which (p.166) the woman had on; this belongs to them by right**, as I have said." [Tavernier, Vol.II, p.165-166, quoted by Sita Agrawal]

Methods in Dravida Region

The poison of Brahmanism had already seeped, Agrawal mentions, deep into the veins of South India when Tavernier arrived, and Brahmin genocide of Dravidians was in full swing. Tavernier was himself witness to many scenes of Brahmin men murdering Dravidian women in cold blood by the most horrible means imaginable. Here is one such description of the Brahmin murder of a Dravidian woman :

"In the greater part of the Coromandel coast the woman does not burn herself with the body of her deceased husband, but allows herself to be interred, while alive, with him in a hole **which the Brahmans dig in the ground**, about 1 foot deeper than the height of the man or woman. They generally select a sandy spot, and when they have placed the man and woman in the hole, each of their friends fills a basket of sand, and throws it on the bodies until the hole is full and heaped over, half a foot higher than the ground, after which **they jump and dance upon it till they are certain that the woman is smothered.**" [Tavernier, Vol.II, p.168, quoted by Sita Agrawal]

Blame the Buddhists and Muslims for all ills of Hinduism(Brahminism)

This was the strategy of modern Brahmanism. Sita Agrawal lists some such bizarre Brahmin fraud hypotheses by several obscurantist Brahminists to "fabricate non-Vedic explanations for the occurrence of sati, often with less than honest intentions"

Corruption : One silly canard spread by the Brahmins, Agrawal says, is that

the custom of sati started when `Hindu' society started to `degenerate' in the Puranic Dark Ages. If so, she asks, then why do the Vedas take this custom for granted? Why did Krishna's wives perform sati? Are we to then conclude that Krishna, an incarnation of Vishnu himself, was a corrupt `Hindu'? Again, where did this corruption come from? When did it start?

Islamic Califate and Sati : One far-fetched Hindu fundamentalist idea ascribes the origin of sati as being due to the molestation of `Hindu' women by Muslim men. Thus the bigoted Brahminist historian Sudheer Birodkar writes: [Birodkar, Ch.3 : The Hindu Ethos]:

" From the 13th century onwards up to the coming of the British, the position of women was insecure due to the arbitrary power structure associated with the feudal society and the rule of the Sultans of Delhi. Although during the reign of the later Mughals the situation had improved relatively, women in the medieval ages were often exposed to the lust of feudal overlords. Their insecurity increased after the demise of their husbands. This compulsion which was resultant of a particular age was by far the most important reason for the prevalence of Sati during the middle ages. "

Needless to say, this fallacious theory would imply the existence of Muslims to molest Krishna's wives, Madri and the galaxy of Vedic Aryan women who performed self-immolation, Agrawal ridicules the theory. It also overlooks, she says, the accounts by ancient Greeks and Arabs on the prevalence of sati. In fact, the Muslim emperors took active steps to abolish sati. (e.g. Ghiyasudin, Akbar, Muhammad Tughlaq) and the Sufi saints condemned it. Thus, we find that Muhammad Tughlaq opposed Sati [Nand, p.173] The saintly Aurangzeb manifestly opposed the custom of sati and prohibited it in his empire. Agrawal asks some pointed questions:

Which `Muslim invaders' molested Krishna's wives, forcing them to perform Sati?

Which Muslims introduced the Sati hymns into the Vedas?

Which Muslims fabricated the whole lot of Hindu scriptures of Puranas, Smrtis and Shastras, inserting the verses praising Sati?

Were the Ocean of Story, the Jatakas and the Panca Tantra authored by Muslims in order to fabricate evidence of Sati?

There is only one reason for the propagation of these lies by the Brahmins; that is to cover up their horrible genocide, Agrawal avers; and comments that it is these infiltrators, such as Mahesh Bhat alias Birbal the Brahmin who sabotaged the Mughal Empire, eventually destroying it.

So why was Sati started?

Thus we find that excepting the solitary instance mentioned by Diodoras, which occurred in a foreign land, and the persons involved were perhaps from foreign tribes settled in India during those times, the practice started from the time of decline and ultimate fall of Buddhism after seventh century. Still we find Banabhatta (7th century) in the court of Harshavardhana and later Medhatithi (9th century) condemning the practice.

The more important question is why this system started, developed and why it attained such a high respect. Sita Agrawal takes the view that the main objectives for the Brahmin genocide of widows was to annihilate the non-Brahmin races by destroying their women, and secondly, to confiscate the properties of the murdered women. This is very superficial analysis. The Brahmins did not loose any opportunity to make money at the cost of others is true. But there were many ways of obtaining monetary benefits other than to start Sati. Secondly, Brahmin women also did commit sati. A glaring example of Queen of Madhavrao Peshava could be cited. So the reasons must be deeper than those thought of by Ms. Agrawal.

Sati custom in India has to be considered in combination with other customs of Child girl marriage with an elderly man and prohibition of widows to remarry. All these customs were imposed by the Brahmins in order to prevent transgression of caste rules. This was explained by Dr. Ambedkar as early as in 1919, [W&S, 1, 5] while dealing with genesis and mechanism of Castes. The following are the salient points from it.

Endogamy is the only characteristic peculiar to caste. No civilized society in today's world shows more survivals of primitive times than Indian society. One such primitive practice is of exogamy long given up by the world but is still favoured in India. Though there are no clans in India, clan system is savoured, as there is prohibition on not only "sapinda" marriages but also on "sagotra" marriages among the Hindus. The various gotras and other totemic organizations have always been exogamous. When endogamy was superimposed over sagotra exogamy, a caste was formed. To preserve and

maintain this caste, inter caste marriages were banned. In case of death of a spouse, the other spouse was likely to marry outside the caste. To prevent this happening various means were adopted. These are:

1. Sati or burning of a widow on the funeral pyre of her deceased husband.

2. Enforced widowhood by which she is forced not to marry and

3. Girl marriage with an aged man.

All the medieval Brahmanic texts eulogize these customs in very glamourous language but give no reasons for them. Dr. Ambedkar, who calls all this eulogy as a sugar coating of the barbarous pill, gives the reasons:

"... Sati, enforced widowhood and girl marriage are customs that were primarily intended to solve the problem of the surplus man and surplus woman in a caste and to maintain its endogamy. Strict endogamy could not be preserved without these customs, while caste without endogamy is a fake." [W&S, 1, 14]

The Brahmins enclosed themselves into a caste, thus forcing others to be the other caste. This was divided and further subdivided into multiple non-Brahmin castes and the institution of castes spread through the length and breadth of India. This spread was due to the tendency of imitation of Brahmins by the others. As these customs were very harsh and barbarous, the imitation was imperfect and we find that nearer a caste is to Brahmins more strictly it insisted on observance of these customs. Example of Kulinism in Bengal, which also was a movement to preserve the Caste and ensure supremacy of Brahmins, is discussed elsewhere. That the reason, these customs had to be enforced strictly in Bengal following Kulinism, was to prevent any one among the hundreds of dissatisfied wives of a Kulin man from easily poisoning him, could be easily appreciated.

Chapter 8

RAJPUT PERIOD WAS DARK AGE OF INDIA
Rise of Rajputs was for suppressing Buddhism

After the fall of Harshavardhana was the time when a new people i.e Rajputs were coming up on horizons, in North India, who were subsequently to dominate the history of India, for some centuries to come. Rise of Rajputs is too big a subject to be discussed here. It could form a subject matter of a separate work. Suffice it to say here that these people were made prominent by the Brahmins, for the specific purpose of suppressing Buddhism by use of force, from among the remnants of Hunas and other foreign hordes which had been broken down by the activities of kings like Baladitya and others, and the local tibals.

The following account is mainly drawn from a school text book, "History of India (Hindu period)" by Prof. L. Mukherjee, M.A., 26th edition., p 198 ff.

It was a transition period marked by a new grouping of states due to Hun invasions

The series of invasions by the Huns and other associated foreign tribes in the fifth and sixth centuries shook the fabric of the society and brought a **rearrangement of the caste system** and of the ruling dynasties. The destructive effects of the Hun inroads were, to a certain extent, arrested by Harsha but as soon as his strong hand was removed, they manifested themselves in a regrouping of states. Hence the latter half of seventh century, during which this new grouping of states took place, is regarded as a period of transition from early to medieval India. The most prominent feature of this transitional period is the rise of the Rajput Clans. Henceforth the Rajputs began to play a prominent part in the history of Northern and Western India. Almost all the kingdoms were ruled by families of Rajputs. Hence the period from the death of Harsha to Muslim conquest is called the Rajput period.

India split up into numerous states due to absence of a paramount power

Another feature of this period is that during this long interval, India was not

permanently occupied by any foreign people. The country was split up into a large number of states ruled by local kings, often at war with each other. There was no paramount power to unite together under one rule the various kingdoms each of which pursued its own course quite independently. Hence the history of this period lacks unity and can not be conveniently presented as a continuous narrative.

The Rajput were mostly of foreign origin

"The term 'Rajput' does not occur in early Sanskrit literature nor do we hear of Rajput clans before the eighth century A.D. This proves that they were a later addition to the population of India. During the troubled times that followed the breakup of the Gupta Empire, many foreign races such as the Huns, the Gurjaras, etc. settled in the Punjab and Rajputana and became Hinduised in course of time. The upper ranks of these foreigners, whose main occupation was war, came to be known as Rajputs, while the humbler folks ranked low in social status and developed into inferior castes such as Gurjaras, Jats and others. As we have already seen Brahmins were clever enough to see that number of princes should be within limits as mentioned by Nair.

They were descended from Hinduised Gurjars and other foreign tribes

Therefore, the division of the same class of people into different social grades was based not on birth but on occupation. Of the Hinduised descendants of the original invaders, those who belonged to ruling classes, with war and government as their chief business, came to be treated as Kshatriyas. The common people, on the other hand, given the rank of lower castes.

Some of the Rajput clans are descended from low caste native tribes raised to importance

Thus many of the most distinguished Rajput clans such as the Chauhans, the Pariharas, the Pawars (Paramaras), the Solankis (Chalukyas) are descended mainly from foreigners, called Scythians by Tod. While others are descended from indigenous tribes of inferior castes elevated to the rank of Kshatriyas. The Rashtrakutas of the Deccan, the Rathors of Rajputana, the Chandels of Bundelkhand are examples of the Rajput clans formed by the promotion of the indigenous tribes of inferior social status. Thus, the

huge group of the Rajput clans include people of the most diverse descent.

The Rajputs not a race but a group of clans of distinct origin

It is clear that the word Rajput has no reference to race, meaning by that term common descent or blood relationship. The diverse origin of the Rajputs show that they were descended from distinct racial stocks. "The term denotes a tribe or clan of warlike habits, the members of which claimed aristocratic rank." It is their war like occupation coupled with their aristocratic rank that gave them a distinctive common feature and made the Brahmins recognize them as Kshatriyas.

Proof of foreign (scythian) origin of Rajputs

The Rajputs according to Tod, are of Scythian origin. He includes under the designation of the Scythian, the nomad hordes of foreign tribes who swooped down upon India during fifth and sixth centuries A.D. Thus the term Scythian refers to the Huns and other associated tribes. Smith puts forward the following arguments to prove the foreign origin of Rajputs. :-

The Pratihara clan of Kanauj has been proved to be of Gurjara origin

It is now clearly established that the Huns made their permanent settlements mainly in the Punjab and Rajputana. The Gurjaras, the most important of the Hun group of tribes established a powerful dynasty in Kanauj. It has now been definitely proved that Bhoja and other kings of the dynasty belonged to the Pratihara clan of the Gurjara tribe. Hence the famous Pratihara or Paramara clan of Rajputs was certainly descended from the Gurjara stock. The fact that one of the well known Rajput clans is undoubtedly of Gurjara stock raises a strong presumption that the other clans also are the descendants from the Gurjaras or the allied foreign immigrants.

Evidence of legend of fire pit at Mt. Abu

This presumption receives support from the familiar legend about the fire pit at Mount Abu in southern Rajputana. The legend appears in the Chand Raisa and other works. It groups together four Rajput clans into a brotherhood based on their common origin from a sacrificial fire pit at Mt. Abu. The clans mentioned are the Pawars (Paramaras), the Pariharas (Pratiharas), Chauhans and the Solankis or Chalukyas. They are all

mentioned as being "Agnikula" or fire born. The legend shows that the four clans mentioned are all related to one another and that they all arose in southern Rajputana. Now as the Pariharas are undoubtedly of foreign origin their allied tribes are also similarly descended from foreign sources.

Prof. Mukherji makes a note, which is now more or less an accepted view that:

"The fact seems to be that when a foreign clan or a tribe became Hinduised that ruling families were recognized as Kshatriyas while the rank and file lost their tribal character and developed into an Indian caste of inferior rank."

Dr. Ambedkar has observed:

"One view is that they are foreigners, remnants of the Huns who invaded India and established themselves in Rajputana and whom the Brahmins raised to the status of kshatriyas with the object of using them as means to suppress Budhisms in Central India by a special Ceremony before the sacred fire and who were therefore known as Agnikula kshatriyas...." [W&S,7,178]

He has also given views of Vincent Smith, William Crooke and R.D Bhandarkar. A relevant portion is reproduced here. Vincent Smith observed: [W&S,7,178 ff.]

"...These foreigners like their fore -runners the Sakaa and the Ye-chi university yielded to the wonderful assimilative power of Hinduism(Brahminism) and rapidly became Hinduised. Clans or Families which succeeded in winning chieftains were admitted readily into the frame of Hindu polity as Kshatriyas or Rajputs and there is no doubt that the pratiharas and many other famous Rajputs clans of the north were developed out of the barbarian hordes which poured into India during the fifth and sixth centuries. The rank and file of the strangers became Gujars and castes ranking lower than Rajputs in theirs precedence. Further to the south, Various indigenous or aboriginal tribes and clans underwent the same process of Hinduised social promotion in virtue of which Gonds, Bhars, Kharwars and so forth emerged as Chandels, Rathors, Gaharwars and other well known Rajputs clans duly equipped with pedigree reaching

back to the sun and moon."

Agnikula Rajputs

William Crooke observed:

"... The group denoted by the name Kshatriaya or Rajput depended on status, rather than on descent, and it was therefore possible for foreigners to be introduced into these tribes without any violation of the prejudices of the caste, which was then only partially developed. But it was necessary to disguise this admission of foreigners under a convenient fiction. Hence, arose the legend, how, by a solemn act of purification or initiation under the superintendence of the ancient Vedic Rishis, the fire born septs Known as Agnikula or fire born - viz., the Parmar, Parihar, Chalukya and Chauhan." [W&S,7,178 ff.]

Why was the word used to denote illegitimate children?

Though the word "Rajput" is supposed to be a corrupted form of the Sanskrit word 'Raajaputra' which means a "scion of the royal blood" and that the word occurs in the Puranas and also in the Harshcharita of Bana, Mahajan is honest enogh to accept that the word, in earlier times and in some areas even now, had an disrespectful meaning, as he says:

"The word "Rajput" is used in certain parts of Rajasthan to denote the illegitimate sons of a Kshatriya chief or Jagirdar." [Mahajan: 1972: 550 ff.]

Mahajan does not explain why this is so. But the conclusion is obvious that they were not considered by the original residents to be respectable, to start with. This is because "Raaja" means royal but "Raj" means semen. The progeny of mixed marriages is even now called by that name in some parts.

Tod's views about their Origin

There are many theories about the origin of the Rajputs. Mahajan summerizes Tod's views. [[Mahajan: 1972: p.551] According to Tod, the Rajputs were the descendants of the Sakas, Hunas, Kushanas, Gurajaras, etc., who came to India and settled there. In course of time, they were merged into Hindu society. They married Indian wives and made India their home. They were admitted into the Hindu castes. The upper ranks of these foreigners formed a separate war-like class and began to call themselves

Rajputs while the lower classes began to be known as Jats, Ahirs, etc. In support of his theory, Tod pointed out certain resemblances between the various settlers and the Rajputs. Those were horse- worship, Asvamedha sacrifice, bards, war chariots, position of women, omens and auguries, love of strong fermented liquor, worship of arms, initiation of arms, etc.

Views of Tod were accepted by Europian Scholars

The view of Tod was accepted by European scholars. According to William Brooke,

"Recent investigations have thrown much new light on the origin of the Rajputs. A wide gulf lies between the Vedic Kshatriya and the Rajput of medieval times which it is now impossible to bridge. Some clans, with the help of an accommodating bard, may be able to trace their lineage to the Kshatriyas of Buddhist times, who were recognized as one of the leading elements in Hindu society, and in their own estimation, stood even higher than the Brahmana. But it is now certain that the origin of many clans dates from the Saka or Kushana invasion, which began about the middle of the second century B.C. or more certainly, from that of the White Hunas who destroyed the Gupta Empire about 480 A.D. The Gurjara tribe connected with the latter people adopted Hinduism(Brahminism), and their leaders formed the main stock from which the higher Rajput families sprang. When these new claimants to princely honours accepted the faith and institutions of Brahmanism, the mythical would naturally be made to affiliate themselves to the heroes whose exploits are recorded in the Mahabharata and Ramayana. Here arose the body of legend recorded in The Annals by which a fabulous origin from the Sun or Moon is ascribed to two great Rajput branches, a genealogy claimed by other princely families like the Incas of Peru or the Mikado of Japan." [Quoted by Mahajan: 1972: 551]

Foreign origin not accepted by Brahmanic Scholars

The idea of foreign origin hurt the pride of Brahmanic scholars, like C. V. Vaidya and Gauri Shankar Ojha, who do not accept the theory of foreign origin. They believe that ethnology, tradition and probabilities all point to the conclusion that the Rajputs were pure Aryans and not the descendant of the foreigners.

Prof. Mahajan [Mahajan: 1972: 551] summarizes their objections. According

to Ojha, there is nothing striking in the similarities of the customs and manners of the Sakas and Rajputs. The worship of the Sun prevailed in India from the Vedic times and the practice of Sati existed before the coming of the Sakas as is proved by the Mahabharata. The practice of the Asvamedha sacrifice was not unknown. There is mention of such sacrifice in the epic. The worship of arms and horses is not a new thing. The ruling classes in India have always worshipped them.

It is also pointed out that the reading of the Puranas that after King Mahananda of the Sisunaga dynasty, Sudra kings will exercise sovereignty, is not correct. There is evidence to prove the existence of Kshatriya rulers even after the Nanda and Mauryan dynasties.

When Pushyamitra established his power after killing Brihadratha, the last Mauryan king, he performed the Asvamedha sacrifice and at one of those sacrifices Patanjali, the commentator Mahabhashya was also present. If Pushyamitra had been a Sudra, Patanjali would not have been present there.

In the Hathigumpha inscription of Kharvela, there is a mention of the Kshatriyas of Kausambi. The Yadava Kshatriyas ruled over Mathura and the adjoining country before the war of the Mahabharata.

Certain inscription of the 9th and 10th centuries show that the then reigning Rajput families drew their descent from Ram of Suryavamsi or Solar clan and Krishna of Chandravamsi or lunar race. The former Rajput rulers of Bikaner, Mewar, and Jaipur claimed their descent from Suryavamsi clan. Likewise, the princes of Jaisalmer and Cutch took pride in calling themselves the descendants of Chandrawamsi clan. All this must have some history basis.

From the above objections, these scholars seem to have missed the point, and their views are based on flimsy grounds, if not due to pride and prejudice of caste, to say the least. Pedigrees from Sun and Moon and Rama and Krishna are definitely creations of Bards. Nobody says Pushyamitra was a Shudra. He was a staunch Brahmin who murdered the Buddhist King and started the counter- revolution in ancient India, after which culture of *yadnyas*, which had gone into disrepute due to teachings of the Buddha, again started. That there were no Kshatriyas after Nandas was the arrogance of Brahmins to condemn and downgrade the Buddhist Kings

like Asoka and deny them the status of Ksatriyas. Nobody doubts that horses were worshipped by Vedic Kings. We all know about the *Rajmahishi*, the principal queen, sleeping with the dead horse at the close of Horse sacrifice. How does all that disprove Tod's theory of foreign origin?

Agnikula Origin

The theory of Agnikula origin of the Rajputs is given in *Prithviraj Raso* of Chand Bardai. According to this theory, Parsuram, an incarnation of Vishnu, destroyed all the Kshatriyas. However, the Brahmins felt the need of warrior class to defend them. They offered prayers to God at top of Mount Abu. A great Havan was performed for about 40 days. Their prayers brought forth fruit, and from that *Agnikund* or fire pit, there sprang up four heroes and each one of them created a separate Rajput class. Thus came into existence the Chauhans, the Solankis or Chalukyas, the Parmaars and the Pratiharas. This theory still finds credence among the Rajputs. Dr. D. R. Bhandarkar and others have found in this myth a confirmation of their theory of the foreign origin of the Rajputs. According to Edwards, the Agnikul myth represents a rite of puragation by fire, the scene of which was in Southern Rajputana whereby the impurity of foreigners was removed and they became fit to enter caste system. The fictitious character of the story is obvious. It represents a Brahamanical effort to find a lofty origin for the Kshatriya who stood very high in the social order and who gave them a lot of money in charity.

Views of Dr. V. A. Smith,

He believes that the Rajputs were a mixed race. Some of the Rajput clans were the descendants of foreigners like Hunas, Sakas and Kushanas and others belonged to the old Kshatriya tribes. In the beginning, these two groups were opposed to each other but in course of time they got mixed up with each other. To quote Smith, "Thus, the Kshatriya or Rajput group of castes at present essentially an occupational group composed of all clans, following the Hindu ritual, who actually undertook the work of Government; consequently, people of most of the great Rajput clans now in existence in spite of their hoary pedigrees are descended either from foreign immigrants or from indigenous races such as the Gonds and Bhars." [Mahajan: 1972: 552]

Rajput Culture and Civilization.

Mahajan sumerizes their culture. [Mahajan: 1972: 552] The Rajputs had high pride of their lofty pedigrees. Very soon, they developed into a proud and haughty aristocracy and claimed prerogatives and privileges over the general population and were very jealous to maintain them.

However, they had many outstanding virtues and a spirit of chivalry and lived up to it in spite of difficulties. Rajputs were generous and merciful even to enemies if the latter submitted and sought shelter. "A suppliant who had taken sanctuary by his hearth was sacred." According to Tod, "High courage patriotism, loyalty, honour, hospitality and simplicity are qualities which must at once be conceded to them."

Even when they were victorious they did not resort to wholesale massacre of their enemies. They did not cause needless misery to the poor and innocent people. They offered the stiffest resistance to the foreign invaders but if they once submitted and took an oath of fidelity, they remained faithful to their word of honour and gave up allegiance only when they were themselves deserted by the foreign victors.

Veer V. D. Sawarkar, however, considers this as a demerit of Hindus, that they were showing compassion to others at unwanted times, in several places in his Marathi book, *"Saha Soneri Pane"* (Six golden Leaves in the Indian History), which he wrote as an rejoinder to Dr. Ambedkar's remark that the History of Hindus is the History of Defeats.

Fighting was their duty

As they were created for the purpose of putting down the Buddhists by use of force and uphold the supremacy of Brahmins, it was natural that they be mentally prepared to keep themselves ready to fight any time the Brahmanism needs their services. Prof. Mahajan explains:

"The whole of the life of a Rajput was devoted to war. On reaching puberty, a Rajput boy was initiated in knighthood by the ceremony of Kharg Bandha or binding of the sword. He was brought up on the stories of the Ramayana and the Mahabharata. His ideal was Rama. When not fighting, a Rajput spent his time in hunting and hawking or in feats of arms. During his leisure time, he was entertained by his bards and dancing girls. He also spent his

time in drinking opium water (Kusumba) with his retainers. According to Bernier, 'If the Rajput is a brave man, he need never entertain an apprehension of being deserted by his followers; they only require to be well led, for their minds are made up to die in his presence rather than abandon him to his enemies. It is an interesting sight to see them on the eve of adieu one another, as if certain of death.' " [Mahajan: 1972: 554]

"... The Rajputs loved war so passionately that they passed the night before battle, listening to recitation from the Mahabharata, longing for the morning as a lonely wife longs for her husband. They asked: When will the night pass away; when will the morning come: the time of battle?" [Mahajan: 1972: 554]

Why Rajputs failed

Their loyalty to the chief and the clan was very great. They spent their time in quarreling with their neighbours and raiding their territories even for the most trivial reasons. It is stated that once a bloody battle was fought because a Raja, when out hawking, picked up a particle which had fallen over the boundary of his neighbour. But that was the intention of their creators. **Brahmins knew that if these people did not fight among themselves, they would be burden to Brahmins and a danger to their position in times to come.** That was the reason only the selected few were made Rajputs, the rest remaining Jats, Ahirs and other commoners. Loyalty to Clan and not for nation was the cause of their fall, as Mahajan explains:

"Although the Rajputs were strong and brave, they failed to accomplish much. That was partly due to their clannish patriotism. They cared only for their chiefs and the clans. They did not brother about the country as a whole. They were not able to combine together and defeat the foreign invaders. They kept on quarreling among themselves. They fought separately against the foreign invaders and each one of them was defeated separately. They wasted all their time and energy in mutual bickerings and jealousies and no wonder they accomplished nothing. Had the Rajputs learned to pool all their sources together, it would have been impossible for the Muslim invaders to defeat them. The history of India would have been different." [Mahajan: 1972: 554]

Rajput Government.

As is well known, the government of the Rajputs was of a feudal character. All Rajput kingdoms in Northern India were divided into a large number of *jagirs* held by the *jagirdars*, who were mostly of the same family as the Rajput chiefs. The strength and security of the State depended upon those jagirdars rendering financial assistance and military service to the king. They were bound to the king by ties of personal devotion and were supposed to prove their fidelity in times of difficulty or danger. Such a government was bound to be inefficient as it fostered individualism and stood in the way of to combination of all the political forces in the state for a common purpose. Since everything depended upon the personality of the king, everything was paralysed if the king happened to be a weak person. No wonder, feuds were a common feature. [Mahajan: 1972: 554]

Life of a common man

It is to be noted that changes in the government at the centre did not affect the life of the people in the villages. The people continued to manage their affairs in their village councils, under Brahmanic control undisturbed by bigger events. Revenue of the state was collected through the agency of Panchayats. The latter also administered civil and criminal justice. The head man of the village and the Patwari performed their usual functions of collecting land revenue and submitting the same to the Treasury.

Social Life.

Prof. Mahajan explains how caste system was made rigid and how Brahmins arranged for their dominance to be always maintained.:

"The caste system dominated the Rajput society. There were not only the Brahmanas, Kshatriyas, Vaishyas and Sudras but also many new sub-castes. In Rajput society, the Brabmanas occupied the first place and commanded the greatest respect. They claimed to have the monopoly of all knowledge, whether it was spiritual or secular. They acted as counselors and ministers of the Rajput Kings. ... The Brahmanas were known as priests and philosophers. They enjoyed those privileges and facilities which were not enjoyed by others. For example, capital punishment was not awarded to Brahmanas. The Rajput rulers and soldiers came from the Kshatriyas. The work of business and money-lending was done by the Vaishyas. The

Sudras followed the profession of agriculture and artisans. They also served all the three higher castes. The untouchables lived outside the village or the town." [Mahajan: 1972: 555]

Rigidity of Caste System

The rigidity of Caste system is the legacy of the Rajput period. All the severity and the degradation was brought about during this period. All those masses practicing Buddhist faith and following different vocations became castes. That is, they stopped marrying among themselves. How such castes were produced by imposition of endogamy on an exogamous group and how this was due to the feeling of imitation of Brahmins, was explained by Dr. Ambedkar long time back in 1919, and mentioned by us earlier. About Rajput period, Prof. Mahajan observes:

"Caste system was not rigid at the beginning of the Rajput period ... However, in the later Rajput period, the caste system become very rigid and in doing so the Brahmanas played the most important part. During this period a large number of new castes or sub-castes came into existence. ... Many new occupational castes such as those of the carders, weavers, smiths, fishermen, brewers, oil men, cow-herds, carpenters, etc., came into existence. A new caste known as that of the Kayasthas also appeared. The main function of the Kayasthas was clerical. Probably the Kayasthas came from many castes." [[Mahajan: 1972: 555 ff.]

The role of a Bard

The importance of bards in Rajput period can not be under estimated. The bard, the Bhat or Charan was an important feature of the court life of the Rajputs. He recited the heroic deeds of the ancestors of the Rajputs. He was an important and favoured person, He was the reposiitory of the unwritten history of the clan. He was the undisputed authority on all genealogical matters. He was the registrar of the family's births, deaths and marriages. His verdict was final in setting disputes about the division of ancestral property or of caste and consaguinity in the case of wedlock. The person of the bard was sacrosanct. He acted as a herald in war, and as a pledge for the fulfilment of contracts. If those contracts were broken the bard would commit *"Traga"* or religios suicide, and thereby bring the most terrible of curses upon the head of the offender.

The difficulty in deciding about origin of Rajputs has been increased on account of the fact that the Brahamanas and these bards have given very lofty pedigrees to the Rajputs, tracing them from the Sun and the Moon and some of them believed in the theory of Agnikula.

Condition of women in Rajput times

Though we hear of "swayamwara" in Rajput times, which gives an impression of adult marriages, in reality, the age of marriage was growing earlier, as per tenets of Manu Smriti, and child marriages were rampant. This curse goes on even today, and many responsible leaders do not consider it as an evil practice. There were plenty of child widows and the remarriage of a widow was not allowed. The result was that young widows had to live a life of misery. The practice of polygamy was very common. The birth of a daughter was not liked by the Rajputs as it was felt that the father of a girl would have to show himself inferior at the time of her marriage. No wonder, many girls were killed at the time of their birth by or with the connivance of their own prents. The question of women education was unthinkable. The condition of an average woman was deteriorating. She was becoming more and more dependent on her husband or his male relatives.

The Brahmanic authors, poets and bards have not only glorified "Sati", they have glorified the "Jauhar" also, which was a mass suicide in order to escape defilement at the hands of the victor of alien faith. Women were made to believe that this was worse than death. This was most horrible method to preserve the caste, ever seen in India. There are examples in Rajput history when women entered fire to save their honour.

Conditions of upper classes

As of today, agriculture was the main profession of the people. While the poor toiled as free labour for constructions of temples and forts and palaces, for the construction of many irrigation works, reservoirs, tanks, wells and canals in time of famine, scarcity or drought, the condition of upper castes was very good. Mahajan explains:

"... Trade and commerce flourished during the Rajput period. Big cities were linked up with roads. The people were wealthy and prosperous. The fame of their riches invited the cupidity of the Muslim invaders. ... The upper classes

lived in palatial buildings and enjoyed all kinds of comforts. They had even slaves. There were many festivals and fairs throughout the year. Music, dancing, drama, dice, hunting, chess, etc. were very favorite hobbies. Both men and women put on ornaments, they were fond of various kinds of dresses. ... The upper classes did a lot of drinking. The use of opium and wine was common. The use of betel leaves was popular, ..." [Mahajan: 1972: 557]

Superstitions in Rajput period

About how caste system and Brahmin supremacy was destroying the old Buddhist vitality and assimilative power, Mahajan observes:

"It has been stated that "**the people were kept in ignorances, fed with unwholesome superstition and beguilded with gorgeous and never ending festivals.**" The Hindus were losing their old assimilative power. They were losing their old vitality. The rigid caste system was making them unprogressive. The dominance of the Brahmanas, both in spiritual and secular matters was doing havoc." [Mahajan: 1972: 557]

Regional Languages flourished

The "Kalivarjya" had made its impact. The country was broken into regions and even a few miles constituted "*par desh*", i.e. a foreign land. The language which originally was Prakrit with slight differences in dialect, spoken by masses throughout the country, got divided into regional languages. **These were made stronger and stronger by regional feelings developed by Brahmins by creating literature in these languages thus making them even more powerful, though at the same time taking care that their own language, i.e. Sanskrit, over which they retained monopoly, remains same throughout India.** Mahajan observes:

"It is to be noted that it was during the Rajput period that vernacular literature made progress. It is rightly contended that the foundation of the modern vernacular languages of India such as Hindi, Gujrati, Marathi and Bengali were laid down in the Rajput period. Poetry was first developed in the vernacular literature of this period. Hemchandra Suri, a great Jain saint, made a great contribution towards our national literature." [Mahajan: 1972: 559]

Obscene Art flourished

The Rajputs were great builders of temples, for the benefit of Brahmins. Though many are destroyed by Muslims, some are still surviving to show the skill, money and labour spent on creation of them. Unfortunately the later Rajput creations of art are the preservations of sexual obscenity.

"... The art critics divide the evolution of temple architecture in the Rajput period into two parts, The first part covered the period from 600 to 900 A.D. During the first period, there was a regular progress in the abundance of ornamentation in temple architecture. The originality of the ancient times was lost and the artisans relied on volume to give an expression of grandeur. Their tastes degenerated and we come across obscene figures. That was probably due to the influence of Tantrism on Hinduism(Brahminism). It has rightly been said that there is no beauty of original art in the architectural monuments of the age." [Mahajan: 1972: 559]

Ranas of Mewar too

Also some tribal chiefs were among those who became the Rajputs. Giving example of House of Mewar which played important role in political and military history of India for centuries to come, and gave heroes like Bapa Raval, Rana Sanga, and Rana Pratap, Stella Kramerish observes:

"Formerly they (Bhils) ruled over their own country. This was prior to the arrival or Rajputs. The Rajputs, the 'sons of king', invaded the country, subsequently Rajasthan in about sixth century A. D. They became Kshatriyas, the nobility par excellence of India. Some of these Rajput princes, including the most exalted of them, the Rana of Mewar, at the inception of their rule, had their foreheads marked with the blood of a Bhil. It was drawn from his thumb or big toe. This was an acknowledgement of the precedence of Bhils as rulers of the country". [Stella Kramerish: 1968:90; fn:- Koppers, "Die Bhil", p.14]

Southern India

In Southern India, the rite performed for purification, convertion, and initiation into awarding Ksatriyahood was called *"Hiranya-garbhs mahadana"* and the king was designated as *Hiranya-garbha-prasuta*, i.e. "one who performed the sacred rite of hiranya-garbha which consists in the

performer passing through an egg of gold which was afterwards distributed among the officiating priests". [Sircar: 1988: 225]

The Hiranya garbha prasuta kings of South India belong to the following dynasties,

1. Ananda gotra connected with Chezarla
2. Vishnukundin connected with Srisaila
3. Chalukyas
4. Pandyas
5. Rashtrakutas

Andhra Desha - Ananda Kings

Pallavas of Kanchi conquered heart of Andhra country around end of third century. The area around Guntur was freed from Pallavas by the dynasty of kings called "Ananda gotra". Only three kings are known from inscriptions; they are 1. Kandra, 2. Attivarman, and 3. Damodarvarman. Different dates, from 290 to 630 A.D., have been ascribed to these kings by different scholars. King Kandara was founder of city of Kandarapura, identified with modern Chezarla in Guntur District.

Damodarvarman, who is regarded predecessor of Attivarman, was devotee of Samyak Sambuddha. The Kapoteswara temple at Chezarla of fourth century was a originally a chaitya hall later converted into a brahmanic temple. He is described as son of king who performed Hiranyagarbha mahadana. Attivarman, worshiper of Sambhu, performed this mahadana. [Sircar: 1988: 202 ff.]

Vihnukundins - Srisailam

Their original home was Venukonda, 60 miles east of Srisaila hills, giving them the name. They were worshipers of god "Shriparvata Swamin". Whether it is identified with Srisailam Mallikarjuna Siva can not be certain. As a matter of fact, Sriparvata has been identified with a Buddhist site Nagarjun Konda. Whether it is identified with Srisailam or Nagarjun Konda, in either way it denotes Buddhist origin.

In his own charters, Madhava Varman I is credited with having performed Hiranygarbha mahadana. He was great patron of learning. He is referred to

in the Arya Manjushri Mulkalpa as Madhava. [Sircar: 1988: 208 ff.]

K. R. Srinivasan has confirmed that what is now known as Anantasayangudi cave temple in Undavali was a temple of Vishnukundin times and originally a Buddhist temple which was converted to a Vishnu temple. [p. 33 and 81, 'Temples of South India']

Chalukyas of Badami

Imperial Chalukyas of Badami (Bijapur district) reigned over vast areas for about two centuries. They were indigenous people, claiming status of Ksatriyas. Hiuen Tsang refers to Pulakesin II as Kshatriya. The Badami inscription of Chalukya Vallebheswara, i.e Pulakesin I, of 543 A.D., represents the monarch as "Hiranya garbha prasuta". So also do the records of his son Mangalesha's times. [Sircar: 1988: 227]

It is interesting to note that later inscriptions try to connect the dynasty to Manu or Moon and associates it with Ayodhya, though all such claims are myths. [Sircar: 1988: 229 ff.]

Swami Dharmatirtha observes:

"In the Deccan the Buddhist Kings were superseded by a Rajput dynasty, the Chalukyas, who were protagonists of Brahmanism. The fourth king of this line Pulkesi I destroyed the monastery at Amaravati and abolished Buddhism in those parts. He performed Ashwamedha Yajna and other sacrifices; grants of lands were made to the brahmanas; temples were built; worship of Siva in the terrible form of Kapaleswara was made popular." [p. 115, Menace of Hindu Imperialism]

The Pandyas

We know the Kalabharas, the Buddhist kings, had convulsed the affairs in Tamil country. They were defeated by Kondugan Pandya, (c. 590-620 A.D.) who is considered as the founder of Pandya dynasty. Huen Tsang says there were many Buddhist monasteries in ruins but only a few monks.

Arikesari Parankusha Marvarman (c.670-710) was the ruler under whom began the imperial career of Pandyas. He is identified with Kun Pandya who was converted from Jainism to Saivism by saint Sambandar who cruelly persecuted the Jains. According to the story, 8000 Jains were impaled on

stakes. Chola queen had invited Saint Sambadar to Madura.

Marvarman Rajsimha I, was a powerful ruler, (c. 740-765) who defeated Chalukyas and married a Western Ganga princess. The famous Velvikudi grant of his son Nedunjadaiyan mentions that Rajsimha had made many mahadanas, gosahasras, hiranya-garbhas and tulabharas. [Sircar: 1988: 268]

Rashtrakutas - Dantidurga

Formerly a feudatory of Chalukya, Dantidurga was the founder of Rastrakuta dynasty, a strong, aggresive and militant supporter of Brahmanism. Cave XV at Ellora called Dasavtara, which has a long undated inscription of Dantidurga carved on its entrance, was originally a Buddhist Vihara, which was converted to Brrahmanic Temple, by chiseling out Buddhist images. [Yazdani: 1960: 731]

Dantidurga is reported, in a later record, to have performed Hiranyagarbha at Ujjayini in which "kings such as Gurjara lord and others were made door-keepers" [Altekar:1955:1]

Persecution of Buddhists was maximum during Rajput period

The persecution of Buddhists was started by the Brahmins long time back. The authority of Brahmins over the masses was tremendous. Masses following Buddhist tenets was a great danger to Brahmin supremacy. They had tried to sabotage Buddhist sangha and Asoka had to drive away sixty thousands of fake bhikus. Real persecution of Buddhists had started at the time of Pushyamitra Shunga, who burnt monasteries and killed many monks.

Persecution by Mihirgula was so horrible, that he was declared by Brahmins to be an avatar of "Kalanki", the tenth avatar of Vishnu, which now they say is yet to come. He built big temples for the benefit of Brahmins and wiped out all Buddhist monasteries.

All this had happened before the Brahmins brought in the Rajputs. But there was some life left in Buddhism, the religion of masses. This was wiped out during the Rajput period. this period was the "Dark Age" of India. Mentioning about this period, Swami Dharmateertha rightly observes:

"But so long as India had at least a glimmer of national life and freedom, she made incessant efforts to assert her self-respect and thwart Brahman tyranny and it was only when the country ultimately fell a victim into the hands of foreigners the Buddhism was crushed to death and Brahmanism spread its fangs over the prostrate people.

He quotes R. C. Dutt who says:

"For it was in the Dark Age that religious persecution began in India. Monasteries were demolished, monks were banished, and books were burnt: and wherever the Rajputs became rulers, Buddhist edifices went down and Hindu temples arose. By the end of the 10th century, Buddhism was practically stamped out from India, and the work of destruction was completed by the Muslims who succeeded the Rajputs as masters of India." [Epochs of Indian History, by R. C. Dutt] .lm Swami Dharma Teertha further avers:

"So complete was the destruction that modern antiquarians and historians who have gathered Buddhist sacred books from all parts of Asia have not succeeded in gleaning any valuable text from India. [Swami: 1946: 108]

Why did Brahmins need the Rajputs?

That the Rajputs were created by priestly class to supress the religion of Buddha is well known. But **the permenent solution could have only come through a class who will not only be subservient to them, but also would be careless about the welfare of masses and join hands with them in exploiting them.**

Magadha was always against Aryan civilization of Vedas and hence an eyesore for priestly power, as *Panchavimsha Brahmana* mentions people of Magadha are having non-aryan culture, and were called *Brahmabandhu* - a degraded Brahmin, and "even now is under ban, for the Brahmins of Mithila will avoid bathing on this side of Ganges on auspicius occasions" (J.N.Samaddar, *Glories of Magadha*, p.6). All this was because of the Buddha's Dhamma.

We find in the history of India, king after king came into power by Brahmin help, but got disgusted by the tyranny of Brahmins and accepted Buddhism. Brahmins had to find another usurper or invader to replace him. They

already had acquired legal and religious right to kill the unwanted king through codification by Manu. Explaining how Brahmins frequently used Indian usurpers and even foreign invaders as an instrument of enforcement of Brahmanism over masses, Swami Dharma Teertha observes:

"... These unpatriotic and some times treacherous methods were also sought to be justified by the philosophy of Puranas. ..." [Dharma Teertha, p. 111]

Chandragupta was instigated to rebel against Nandas, but rebelion failed and he had to flee to Punjab. He and Chanakya's Brahmin supporters tried to invite Alexander to invade Magadha, but were unsuccessful. Brahmins were very happy when ultimately Chandragupta Maurya captured the throne and came to power by help of a clever Brahmin, Kautilya. Chandragupta's empire grew but his grandson Asoka became devout Buddhist and all plans and dreams of Brahmins were foiled. So they brought in Pushyamitra Shunga and later Kanva kings. But another rising Indian people, the Satvahanas, who were patrons of Buddhism, foiled their designs. So Brahmins carved out a kingdom for Wema-Kadphises II, who worshipped Brahmanic gods. The next king Kanishka was initially under Brahmanic influence but later on when he became enthusiastic patron of Buddhist Sangha, he was killed by smothering to death in his bed by a pillow.

King of Kashmir Jayapira, who trusted Kayastha ministers, was killed. King Nahapana in Saurashtra was helped to revolt against Magadha. He helped Brahmins but later refused to become puppets of Brahmins and also patronized Buddhism along with Brahmanism.

After Kingdom of Magadha under Satvahanas was broken down, Brahmins managed to bring Gupta reign, and thus started **"a long period of Brahmanical supremacy, huge horse sacrifices, and the revival of Sanskrit"** [Dharma Teertha, p.116]

During Gupta period Brahmins consolidated their gains, temple worship was started in place of Vedic religion, Puranas were edited and reedited, caste system, the "most deadly weapon of imperialistic domination ever invented by human brain" was started to "effectively divide them into groups and prevent their rising against their oppressors", temple worship was started which was "another instrument in the scheme of priests to exploit the

people". They had to make some changes in their religion but as Swami Dharma Teertha observes:

"Brahmanism has never stood for any religious doctrine or faith. **Its life and soul, then, as it is now, was the Caste System with the Brahmin as the highest sacredotal caste, and its vital interest was priestly exploitation."**

These objectives were achieved to a great extent even before the Gupta age. Then why did they need the Rajputs? Swami Dharma Teertha observes:

"Though all these things were accomplished in the Gupta period, there was yet no guarantee that Brahman predominance would be upheld by succeeding rulers, and without the king's support it could not be maintained. Repeated experience had shown that though new kings, in order to obtain Brahman co- operation to establish their power, often yielded to the wishes of the latter, no self-respecting ruler would long tolerate the yoke of Brahmanism. Indian kings almost invariably, encouraged Buddhism side by side with Brahmanism, even when they had been raised to power with the help of Brahmans. **Brahmanism could therefore be permanently established only with the disappearance of Buddhism and also of all Indian rulers, Its security lay in the revival of a race of Kshatriya princes who would submit to the Brahmanas the highest caste and whose primary concern would be exploitation of the country the common platform on which priestly imperialism could join hands with foreign imperialism.** It happened exactly like this. The Brahmans did not rest until they succeeded in handing over the nation to a new race of Kshatriyas, the Rajputs whom they raised to Kshatriya-hood for the purpose and who in a few centuries enslaved the country first to debasing priest craft, and then to Mohammedan fanaticism." [Swami Dharma Teertha, p. 117]

Harshavardhana was a staunch supporter of Buddhism, along with Brahmanism. At the time of visit of Huen Tsang, Brahmins tried to kill Harsha. As a result, five hundred Brahmins, it is said, were banished from the kingdom. Remember, they could not be put to death. This temporary setback did not deter the Brahmins. After the death of Harsha, Brahmins got their opportunity. As Havel expressed,:

"It was therefore to be expected that orthodox Brahmanism would seize the opportunity of Harsha's death to reassert its political supremacy in Aryavrata." [E.B.Havell, History of Aryan Rule in India, p. 217, Quoted by Dharma Teertha, p. 118]

Chinese mission who visited in response to Harsha's complementary mission, was insulted by the minister of Harsha who had usurped the throne. This infuriated the Chinese leader and getting help from Tibet, he overran Magadha and the **Brahmin king of Assam helped Chinaman with large supplies of military equipment and cattle, thus finishing the mighty Buddhist kingdom of Harsha.** This was the opportunity for the Brahmins to assert their dominance. Swami Dharma Teertha observes:

"The empire having been broken up, the Brahmans took the opportunity to invite foreign adventurers to support their cause. The Rajputs appear on the scene as the valiant protectors of Brahmanism. Historians do not know definitely the origin of the Rajputs, but all are agreed in believing that they were the descendants of some of the foreign invaders. That they were raised to power by the Brahmans is admitted in the legend of the Puranas. It says that they were the descendants of four warriors conjured into existence by the sage Vasishta from the sacrificial fire he kindled on Mount Abu. In plain language they were a new people raised to Kshatriyahood by the Brahmans in order that they might reestablish Brahmanism in the land.

"Everywhere they favourd Puranic Hinduism(Brahminism), and the Brahmans rewarded them for their toil, and reorganized the new race as the Kshatriyas of modern time." [Dutt R. C., 'Later Hindu Civilization', p.38]

"Whatever the origin of the Rajputs may be, there is no doubt that they were newcomers within the pale Hindu civilization and religion. Like all new converts they were fired with an excessive zeal to revive the religion they embraced. Brahmans worked on the zeal of this new race of Kshatriyas and the Chohan and the Rathore vindicated their claims to be regarded as Kshatriyas by established the supremacy, of the Brahmans." [Dutt R. C., 'Later Hindu Civilization', p. 40, quoted by Dharma Teertha, p. 119]

Rajput age was a Dark Age for masses of India

Swami Dharma Teertha narrates the further story in these words:

"With the help of the Rajputs who became powerful in all parts of India, Brahmanism entered on a career of merciless extirpation of Buddhism, and with it of nationalism. The avenues of light and information were all closed, From the 8th to the 10th century an impenetrable darkness enveloped Northern India. History refuses to disclose the nature of the happenings of that terrible darkness. As in the Dark Age which followed the Mahabharata War, so **under the cover of this frightful oblivion, Brahmanism did its work thoroughly, monasteries were demolished, monks were banished or killed, books were burnt, Buddhism was stamped out; nationalism was crushed. The country fell into the hands of Rajput barons, soon to be followed by the Mohammedan invaders who completed the work of annihilation.** Rajputana became a congeries of rival states, each with its own chief, war loving and constantly quarreling with each other." [Dharma Teertha, p.119]

"There could be hardly any doubt that **Rajput rule was an undiluted military imperialism, a coalition of Kashtriya exploiters and insatiable Brahman priests,** in which the people were fleeced to amass wealth for palaces and temples. In an incredibly short time huge temples requiring the labour of many thousands of workmen, generally slaves or prisoners, and involving fabulous expenditure, were built all over the country; the secret cells of temples were filled with gold and silver and other treasures beyond description. Hundreds of dancing girls with all the temptations of music and decoration served in the temples to complete the vices of priest craft. The kings surrounded themselves with all imaginable pomp, luxury and vice. Nobody cared for the people; we hear nothing of the people when the Mohammedan invaders made their incursion in to the big cities and temples for plunder of the accumulated treasures. The princes kept quarreling among themselves for wealth and women. The Brahmans were sunk deep in the temptations of the temple. We see Mohammedans marching through the country hundreds of miles without anybody opposing them, appearing before the gates of cities and temples, before the authorities got any information, and loaded with rich booty returning unmolested over vast tracts of inhabited area. There seemed to be no government in the land.

"The despotic nature of the regime could be noticed also in the **employment by Rajput rulers of large bodies of Mohammedan mercenaries. It was so in Vijayanager too. another Brahman dominated empire. Both in North India and in Vijayanager, the presence of Mohammedan troops in the heart of the Hindu kingdoms,**

in the employed and confidence of their rules, facilitated the final success of the Mohammedans. What was worse, the soldiers of Islam were invited to invade India, and there were Rajput princes to help them in their conquest of the country. The four chief royal houses of North India were Delhi, Chittor, Kanouj and Gujrat. The last two kings sided with Mohammedans until they became undisputed masters of the situation. Raja Jaichand of Kanouj is said to have invited Shahabuddin to attack Prithvi Raj of Delhi. [Lala Sundar Dass, "Decline and fall of Hindu Empire", p. 25] India fell betrayed by her own princes and priests who were no more interested in the unity, strength and prosperity of the Indian masses then the Mohammedan or the European conquerors." [p. 121]

The Ruling Class

Swami Dharma Teertha explains how the fate of any country usually depends on the character of its Ruling Class. Even in democratic countries, the rise and fall, the progress and decadence of the nation depends to a great extent on the ideals which animate the policy and conduct of this class. In India, this class is the Brahmins. Swami observes:

"From days immemorial, the Brahmans have been the undoubted aristocrats of India, the leaders of the people, the custodians of religious and secular learning, unrivaled politicians and administrators, and owners of wealth and power, besides being the trustees of the peoples conscience as priests. Probably no other class of persons in any society ever combined in themselves all these advantages so exclusively as the Brahmans. It is equally doubtful if any other aristocratic class has ever exercised their privileges to the detriment of the common people so unscrupulously and for so long a period as these Hindu priests.

"For an understanding of the causes which have brought India to her present condition no study is more important than that of the policy and doctrines of the Brahmans." [Dharma Teertha, p. 122]

Brahmins were benefited by Muslim Conquest

There is a lot of propaganda now a days, that Muslim period was a foreign rule over Indian masses, who were crushed under the foreign yoke. All this is a great and fake propaganda by the Brahmanical scholars. Actually, it was this class who got the maximum benefits of Muslim raj. Here we have

to remember that India has triple governance. Governance at the village and town level, second is regional level and top most is national level. **The local level governance is the actual governance. In India it makes no difference, who ruled at the top, at the local levels it was the Brahmins who always ruled. And their rule was as per the Laws of caste.** Swami Dharma Teertha observes:

"The disappearance of Buddhism and the passing of political power into the hands of the Mohammedans, though they meant the extermination of national life, was a triumph for Brahmanism. ... in the period of national prostration and political chaos roughly from the eight to the twelfth century after Christ, there is a phenomenal revival, expansion and consolidation of the theocratic domination of the Brahmans. One prominent result of the invasion of India by the Mohammedans was that, so far as Hindu society was concerned, Brahmans became its undisputed leaders and law givers.

"After the overthrow of the Hindu princes by the Mohammedans, the Hindu princes and chiefs lost a good deal of their prestige, but the leadership of the Hindus instead of passing into the new political authority, namely Mohammedan rulers, passed almost entirely to the brahmans." [Kelkar S. V., "An Essay on Hinduism(Brahminism), p. 149]

"There were no powerful Indian rulers to question their right to decide what should be or should not be the religion of the people, and by what principles their social life should be governed. When the Mohammedans had overcome all opposition and settled down as rulers, unless some of them were fanatically inclined to make forcible conversions, they left the Hindus in the hands of their religious leaders and whenever they wanted to pacify them by quiet methods, they made use of Brahmans as their accredited representatives.

"Another great advantage was that, for the first time in history, all the peoples of India, of all sects and denominations, were brought under the supremacy of the Brahmans. Till then they had claimed to be priest of the three higher castes only and did not presume to speak for the Sudras and other Indian peoples except to keep them at a safe distance. The Mohammedans called all the non-Muslims inhabitants, without any discrimination, by the common name "Hindu", which practically meant non-Muslims and nothing more. This simple fact contributed to the unification of India more than any other single event, but also, at the same time,

condemned the dumb millions of the country to perpetual subjection to their priestly exploiters. Indians became "Hindus," their religion became Hinduism(Brahminism) and Brahmans their masters.

"The word Hindu itself is a foreign one. The Hindus never used it in any Sanskrit writing, that is those which were written before the Mohammedan invasion." [p. 22, An Essay on Hinduism(Brahminism), by Kelkar]

"When the Mohammedans came they called all people who were in India, but who did not belong to Mohammedan religion, Hindus. ... All castes and creeds which did not acknowledge Mohammedan religion were Hindus." [p.29, An Essay on Hinduism(Brahminism), by Kelkar.]

"Thus was the Indian people by an innocent accident of history, permanently subjected to a disastrous social and religious in the shaping of which they had no hand and could thereafter obtain no voice, but were entirely at the mercy of the Brahmans. Brahmanism became Hinduism(Brahminism), that is the religion of all who were not followers of the prophet of Mecca. Fortified thus in an unassailable position of sole religious authority, Brahmans commenced to establish their theocratic overlordship of all India." [Swami Dharma Teertha, pp. 123 ff.]

Usually, the power passes from the old rulers to victors, but here the rule did not pass to Muslims. It passed on to Brahmins, as Nair has explained.

What did they do first?

Swami Dharma Teertha explains the activities of Brahmins after they captured the power. It was creation of shastras to suit newer conditions. He observes:

"One of the first signs of Brahmanical revival, as in the past, was the promulgation of new Shastras, Puranas and other religious literature alleged to be the works of ancient sages. The priests must have been conscious of the untenability of their doctrines and their own unworthiness to lay down rules for the good of society, for they wrote new works in the name of ancient authors and altered ancient works to suit their present contentions. There is hardly any Sanskrit composition which has not been tampered with, altered or added to by them. There is no famous Rishi or teacher in whose name they have not concocted scriptures. There is no

sacred book into which fiction and legend and imaginary history have not been interpolated. The most ancient of scriptures, the Rig-Veda, has not escaped the profane hand of interpolators and its tenth book is wholly ascribed to gods as if to conceal their true origin and later authorship. Veracity as to facts was never a feature of Brahman authors, so much so that historical unreliability has become a universal literary characteristics of the Sanskrit language. The best critic would be unable to separate the grain from the chaff, to say where facts end and fiction begins. This is even more the case in regard to the so-called sacred literature. The period of brahmanical revival naturally abounds in such fraudulent Shastras and Puranas." [Dharma Teertha, p. 124 ff.]

Thus we see **the Muslim Rule was also a Brahmanic rule as far as the masses were concerned.** Except for a small period of Akbar's rule, the masses suffered Brahmin tyranny in addition to Muslim fanaticism in between, till Britishers came to the rescue of common man. But even in British Raj, the masses could not escape tyranny of Brahmins, which continues till this date. All these are the ill effects of fall of Buddhism from ancient India. Brahmanic methods of Conversion, as described by H. H. Risley, giving a vivid description of methods of social control and nemesis of Brahmins over the Indian masses, are discussed earlier.

Foreigners were assimilated by Buddhist ideals and not the Brahmanic

Some brahmanic scholars try to glorify their religion by boasting that Sakas, Kusanas, Hunas and other foreigners have disappeared leaving no trace, wheras Brahmanism still persists. Dr. Ambedkar had mentioned that mere survival is not the evidence of greatness. The level of survival was very low. Whereas, Shri L. M. Joshi avers that the assimilation of foreigners into Indian society took place not because of Brahmanism but because of the tenets of Buddhism which preached equality, liberty and brotherhood in the following words:

"Another aspect of Buddhist contribution in ancient India lay in the area of social harmony and racial integration on a national scale, It was through Buddhist influence and teaching of social harmony and tolerance that foreign invaders such as the Greeks, Sakas, Pahlavas, Kusanas and Hunas who came to India and settled here in the course of centuries immediately preceding and following the Christian era, were assimilated by Indian

society. This was a permanent contribution to social integration and national growth and it could not have been so easily accomplished in a strictly Brahmanical scheme of social gradation without the wholesome effects of the Buddhist disregard for varna- organization and respect for the liberty of the individual." **Mindu Muslim Conflict would not have be there if Buddhism was alive at the time of Muslim invasion**

Not only that but he laments that the assimilation of Muslims could not be done into Indian society, beause of the feeling of supremacy of their caste that was practiced by the Brahmins of those days. He further says:

"We are of the view that had Buddhism been a living force at the time of the Turkish invasions, the problems of Hindu- Muslim communal discord in medieval and modern India would not have taken such a strong turn as they did. Because of the revival of the traditional Brahmanical social scheme, reinforced with fresh religious injunctions, and because of the decline of Buddhism in India after the tenth century A.D., the mass of early medieval early Islamic followers in India could not be assimilated and digested by Indian Society. Arnold J. Toynbee has rightly remarked that, "If either Buddhism or Jainism had succeeded in captivating the Indic world, caste might have got rid of. As it turned out, however, the role of universal church in the last chapter of Indic decline and fall was played by Hinduism(Brahminism), a parvenu archaistic syncretism of things new and old; and one of the old things to which Hinduism(Brahminism) gave new lease was caste." [A study of History, (abridged by D. C. Somervll) vol. I, New York, 1969, p. 350] [L.M.Joshi: 1973: 52 ff.]

Chapter 9

KULIN SYSTEM OF BENGAL WAS MEANT FOR SUPREMACY OF BRAHMINS

Traditional Account of Kulinism

The following is the extract taken from the book "The Caste System of the Hindus", by Rajah Comm: Sourindro Mohun Tagore, publ. Indilogical book house, Varanasi. (1963), pp.17 ff.

During the reign of Adisura, a Vaidya King of Bengal, the celebration of a yajna (sacrifice) became necessary owing to a drought, but there having been at that time no Brahmana so learned as to perform it, Adisura requested Virsinha, the King of Kanya Kubjya (Cononj), to send him some Brahmanas versed in the Veda and competent to perform the intended yajna. Five Brahmanas were accordingly sent, viz:-

1. Bhattanarayana [f.n.: The Tagore family has sprung from Bhatta-narayan] who was said to be of Sandilya Gotra, being descended from the sage Sandilya; 2. Sriharsha of Bharadwaja Gotra, from the sage Bharadwaja; 3. Vedagarva of Sawarna Gotra, from the sage Sawarna; 4. Chhandara of Vatsya Gotra, from the sage Vatsya; and 5. Daksha of Kasyapa Gotra from the sage Kasypa. These five Brahmana brought five Kayastha servants with them, viz.: 1. Makaranda Ghosh; 2. Kali Dasa Mitra; 3. Dasaratha Guha; 4. Dasartha Basu and 5. Purushottama Datta. These five Brahmanas as well as their servants the five Kayasthas were afterwards honored as the Kulina. Of these, those who lived in the Barendra land of North Bengal were called the Barendra Brahmanas and thosse who lived in West Bengal were called Rarhi Barhmanas. Those who are not Kulinas among the Rarhis are called Banysagas and among the Barendras are called Kafs. Although the Barendra and the Rarhis have sprung from the same origin, still owing to their living in different localities, they cannot socially mix with each other, e.g. marriage cannot take place between a Barendra and a Rarhi; a Rarhi does not take food cooked by a Barendra and so forth.

Shyamal Varma, a Kshatriya King also brought five Brahmanas from Konouj, viz :- 1. Sanaka; 2. Bhardwaja; 3. Savarna; 4. Sandilya; 5. Vasistha; many years after Adisura. Five willages viz.:-

1. Samahtasar in Furreedpur; 2. Navadwip in Nuddea; 3. Chandradwip in

Backergunj; 4. Kotaliparah in Furreedpur; and 5. Joyari in Rajshahi; were granted to the five above-mentioned Brahmanas respectively. The descendants of these Brahmanas are called the Vaidik Brahmanas. They are divdided into two classes, viz,:- 1. Paschtya, i.e. those who lived in West Bengal; and 2. Dakshinatya, i.e. those who lived in South Bengal. Those two classes of the Vaidiks cannot socially mix with each other. There is no system of Kulinism among the vaidiks.

The five above mentioned Kulin families lived in 56 different villages. They were therefore called Chhappanna Grami (i.e. of 56 village). The word Grami has been corrupted into Gai.

The Kulins may again be distinguished into four Thaks (orders), viz.:- Phule, Vallabhi, Kharda and Sarvanandi. Any of these can take food prepared by any other; but no marriage can take place between them.

This pernicious system of Kulinism is prevelaent only in Bengal. No trace of it whatever can be found in any other country of India. Kulinism has produced immense evil in this country. Owing to this system, a Kulin Brahmana is often obliged to keep his dauthter a maid for ever for want of a bridegroom of the ssame rank of Kulins as he himself is. Sometimes one Kulin Brahmana marries some 300 wives or else those poor girls would not have been married, for there might not be another person of the same social position among the Kulins as their fathers were. The result is that the country is being filled with horrible crimes.

Those Brahmanas who do not follow up their Brahmanical duties, e.g. who act as spiritual guides or as priests of the lowest classes, such as Suvarna vanika, Chandala, &c., are called Patita (degenerated or fallen) Brahmanas.

The Kshatriya caste is rare in Bengal. Those Kshatriyas who live here cannot socially mix with those in the North-Western Provinces; for the former on account of their long residence in the Lower Provinces have adopted to a great measure the habits, manners, and customs of the Bengalis, among whom they live. the Kshatriyas generaly take the surnames of Barman and Mal.

No original Vaisyas can be found in Bengal; in fact unmixed Vaisyas are very rare. The jeweller class of Bengal, called the Jaharis, most likely have sprung from the Vaisyas. Almost all the Jaharis have embraced Jainism. They cannot

socially mix with any other caste in Bengal. [p. 18]

The Sudras are not of Aryan descent.

Among the castes found in Bengal, besides Brahmana, the highest is the Kayastha. This caste is said to have sprung from the Kshatriya caste. The story about the orign of the Kayastha runs thus: While Parusurama, one ofthe ten avatars (incarnations) of Vishnu (one of the Hindu gods - the Preserver of the universe), was engaged in extirpating the Kshatriyas, a Kshatriya king named Bhandrasena and his wife, big with child, took refuge in the hermitage of the sage Talavya. Parasurama went thither to kill them; but the sage informed him that he would on no account allow Parasurama to kill the king and the queen for they were sage's guests. An agreement was then entered into by which the king was not to allow his child, if male, to follow up the profession of a Kshatriya, but the son should leave the sword and have recourse to the pen for his livelihood. A son was born to the king and his descendants were afterwards called the Kayasthas.

The Kayasthas were divided into the Uttara Rarhis, the Dakshina Rarhis and the Bangajas; the last being the original Kayastha inhabitants of Bengal and they now chiefly live in East Bengal. The Dakshina Rarhis at present have largely spread over this part of Bengal, They are subdivided into two classes, viz :- The Kulins and the Mauliks. The Ghoshes, the Basus and the Mitras (three surnames of the Kayasthas) are the Kulins; all the rest being the Mauliks. The Mauliks again are divided into two classes; the Deys, the Dutts, the Kars, the Palits, the Sens, the Sinhas, the Dasses and the Guhas are of the first class, the rest (which number 72) being of the 2nd class, The Guhas of the Bangaja Kayasthas are Kulins. It is said that the Dattas not acknowledging the brahmanas as their masters and themselves as servants of the Brahmanas were not honoured as Kulins.

The Uttara Rarhis, the Dakshina Rarhis and the Bangajas may take food cooked by one another, but no marriage takes place between them.

There are very important social rules with regard to the Kulinism and marriage of Kayasthas. All the Ghoshes, the Basus, and the Mitras, should be called Kulins, but there are different order of the Kulins. The first three sons of a good Kulin should also be good Kulins; his fourth son would form another class called Madhyansa dvitiyapo; his fifth son, another called Kanisthya, and his sixth and the other sons would be called Bansaja. If any of the sons of a Kulin die unmarried, the next younger brother of the deceased would get his

rank.

There is another rule which enforces the first marriage of the eldest son of a Kulin with any daughter of another Kulin of the same rank, or the Kula i.e. the integrity of the social position, will be destroyed. So again the daughter of a Maulik must be married to a son (not the eldest, of course,) of a Kulin, for a marriage between the son and the daughter of the Mauliks lowers both the families, so much so, that no other good Kayastha would ever marry in that family or even take their food.

The Kayasthas have, like the Brahmanas, Gotras of their own; the Gotras of the Ghoshes, the Basus and Mitras are Saukalina, Goutama and Visva Mitra respectively. [p. 20]

In the districts of Bankura, Beerdhoom, Burdwan and Midnapore, Kayasthas are very rare. There the Sadgopas are the chief of all the lower castes. They mostly depend upon agriculture.

Many castes, besides those before mentioned, have sprung up in course of time, by their intermixture, such as the Bagdi, the Poda, the Dule &c.

Another caste, more properly a religious sect, has sprung up since the time of Chaitanya, the caste people being known by the name of the Vaishnavas. Persons of all castes are permitted to become Vaishnavas among whom there is no distinction of castes. [p. 21]

Why Kulin System had to be started

From the above account, it becomes clear why the system started. **It is noteworthy that Tagore, the author of above mentioned account, disposes off the shudras, the 85 percent population, labling them as of non-aryan origin and hence of no concern to him.** The idea of this Kulin System was only to create the population who accepts the domination of Brahmins and observe strict caste rules. The brunt of ill effects of fall of Buddhism, here in Bengal, fell upon the forward castes. What this has led to can be seen by the accounts of struggle that was launched by the leaders of Bengal in the last century. Raja Ram Mohun Roy was busy with problem of Sati and could not devote much time for other reforms. It fell upon Ishwarchandra Vidyasagar to "struggle for abolition of polygamy". **The English word polygamy, which is used to describe kulin system, does not give clear idea to the readers unacquainted with this kulin system,**

which is described below. Most of us are acquainted with 'harem' of kings. We also know among hindus in India, till 1956, there was no law against marrying any number of girls, unlike muslims, who could marry only four wives. But Kulin "polygamy" is something peculiar.

Struggle against Kulinism

Vidyasagar, being himself a kulin, was well conversant with the abuses of the kulin polygamy of Bengal, with increasing numbers of child widows and its attendant problems. Excerpts from a petition to the Company Government in 1855, make interesting reading. : [Benoy Ghose: 1965: 110 ff.]

"The Kulins marry solely for money and with no intention to fulfill any of the duties which marriage involves. The women, who are thus nominally married without the hope of ever enjoying the happiness which marriage is calculated to confer particularly on them, either pine away for want of objects on which to place the affections which spontaneously arise in the heart, or are betrayed by the violence of their passions and their defective education into immorality."

There is a vast literature in Bengal, called *'kulaji'* or *'kulasastra'* dealing with history and genealogy of Brahmins and other important castes. The kulaji of "Radhiya" Brahmins hold them descendants of five families brought in 8th or 9th century by an unidentified king Adisura. The kulaji of "Varendra" hold king Ballalsen (1158-79 A.D.) responsible for founding kulin system. Why this system started? We are told:

"... after the reign of the Pala kings of Bengal, who were patrons of Buddhism, a revival of Hinduism(Brahminism) followed during the reign of Sena kings from the 12th century onwards. There was need for reorganizing the social structure of Hinduism(Brahminism) based on the caste system, and some rigid rules were formulated to maintain the purity of the higher castes, particularly the Brahmins." [Benoy Ghose, Ibid. p.111]

This system, if it deserves such a term of 'system', led to hypergamy where bridegroom must be from a higher caste or subcaste resulting in surplus of unmarried girls. As sastras ordained that the daughters must be married off before puberty and pronounced curses on defaulters, one man married a large number of brides, who were never supported economically by the husband.

"... Thus marriage itself became a gainful occupation. Among the kulin

Brahmins, even septuagenarians and octogenarians, with two or three dozens of wives, were considered good matches by the helpless parents of kulin Brahmin girls. A kind of marriage fees, ranging from Rs. 5/- to Rs. 500/- was usually charged by the kulin Brahmins for marrying a kulin girl. Even teenagers were married to dying octogenarian husbands. The old man's gain, before his death, was a few rupees." [Benoy Ghose, Ibid. p. 112]

Rashbehari Mukhopadhya, a leader of East Bengal, who worked against the system, wrote in 1881, about himself. He was compelled to marry in quick succession to eight girls for

'economic relief of family'. If he was wiling, he would have been forced to marry 'at least one hundred girls within a few years'. As he was unwilling, he was compelled to break away from joint family forcibly with a burden of loan. As a result of this, he had to marry six more girls 'to meet immediate economic needs.' [Benoy Ghose, Ibid. p.113 ff.]

A committee of leading Bengalis, was appointed by the British Lieutenant Governor of Bengal to study the problems of kulin system. Some of the observations of the committee were as follows.

Bridegroom extracts heavy consideration, in addition to usual gifts, from family of bride, at the time of marriage. On the occasion of any visit, presents are given, making marriage a lucrative profession. A kulin Brahmin having, say, thirty wives may find it immensely profitable to pay a monthly visit to each father-in-law's house and spend the whole year enjoying good food and presents, without doing anything for earning his livelihood. This system was making Brahmins a class of 'unproductive parasites'.

Marriage in old age and husband often never sees his wife, or at best visits her once in every three four years or so. As many as three or four marriages are known to have been contracted by one Brahmin on a single day. Sometimes, all the daughters and unmarried sisters are married to same Brahmin.

These married girls, and many who are compelled to remain unmarried, live a very miserable life. The result is the most heinous crimes like adultery, abortion, infanticide, and prostitution.

Cases are known of men marrying 82, 72, 65, 60, and 42 wives and having had 18, 32, 41, 25 and 32 sons and 26, 27, 25, 15 and 16 daughters.

The evils of Kulin system were briefly enumerated by the committee as follows:

"The practical deprivation of the indulgence of natural ties and desires in the female sex in a legitimate manner; the virtual, sometimes the actual, desertion of the wife by her natural and legal protector, the husband; the encouragement of the practice of celibacy amongst the female sex; the non-maintenance of the wife by the husband; the suppression or abandonment of the wife at the mere pleasure of the husband; the formation of the contract of the marriage for merely money considerations; the denial of nuptials except upon special monetary consideration given; the ruin, from a property point of view, of families; the contraction of the marriage tie avowedly without any intention even on the part of the husband of fulfilling any one of the duties of that tie; the binding down of the female sex to all the obligations of the marriage state, whilst yet withholding from that sex every one of the advantage of that state; prostitution; and, lastly, the encouragement of the actual crimes of adultery, abortion and infanticide, and of the habit and practice of the concealment of such crimes." [Benoy Ghose, Ibid. p.119]

In 1871 and 1873, Vidyasagar published two tracts, wherein he gave statistics of kulinism with long list of names giving the number of their wives with their ages. **Some of the kulin Brahmins did not even know how many girls they had actually married.** Some kept a diary with accounts of marriages and presents received at the time of marriage and further on each visit, being recorded. [Benoy Ghose, Ibid. p. 121 ff.]

Vidyasagar writes in first one of these two books:

"One of the root causes of our social disintegration is the prevalence of the custom of polygamy in the hindu society. It has been eroding the moral foundation of our society for centuries, and breeding many ills and vices. Thousands of married women are being daily thrown into the hell of untold sufferings for the continuity of this inhuman custom. It has let loose all conceivable vices and uprooted the moral anchors of society. It is encouraging all sorts of vices - adultery, debauchery, infanticide and prostitution. .." [Benoy Ghose, Ibid. p. 122]

Why Kulinism?

It must be remembered that all these sufferings were caused by the Brahmins to their own kith and kin, their own women folk, with only one intention, that is

to keep the supremacy of their own caste, which was in danger due to Buddhist ideals in the society during the Buddhist kings' rule.

To understand the background of this system we have to go into the History of Bengal and its people. The following information is drawn mostly from Sarita Mukta Reprints vol. 9, p.117 ff. article by Vasant Chatterji - *"bangal ke bangali kaun?"* sarita July 1968 (II), 262

Vasant Chatterji very aptly remarks:

"Bengal, which now remains as only west Bengal, is a different from other states of India. It is different in many respects like history, casteism, religion, politics, education. What applies to rest of India about social and economic matters does not apply to Bengal. It has got its own separate situation."

Chatterji laments that the knowledge about Bengal is also limited. The popular ideas that Bengalis are "bhuka bangali" or they are "communists" are both wrong ideas. He feels, rather sarcastically, that those who can be called real Bengalis are hardly 30 to 40 lakhs in a total population of about 3.5 crores. As mentioned above, Tagore has disposed off 85% population in one line by calling them as non-Aryans and hence of no importance. According to Chatterjee, the majority of population consists of following groups:

Original inhabitants

1. Old 'mul nivasi' of Austrasiai or Austric origin, which go by the name of 'Kol' (Kolerian). They live in water logged areas and are experts in navigation and cultivation of rice and are brave and able to tolerate hardships.

Bengal was outside 'aryavrat' for about thousand years. The aryas going there used to be declared 'condemned' and 'depressed' (bhrashta and patit), and were excommunicated. During those centuries, Mongoloid migration occurred. They all intermixed with original inhabitants, were called as 'kirat' and 'monkhemr' etc., and ruled the country as a powerful non-aryan state for many dynasties.

Presumably, he is referring to kingdoms from the times of Lord Buddha, till the arrival of Brahminical culture to Bengal in the times of Samudragupta - a Buddhist period of history.

In fourth century, Bengal became part of a so called 'hindu' empire. The original inhabitants were now called 'kaivart'. It was an old tradition of Aryas to

call any non aryan living near sea or river as 'daasha' or 'daasa' (mallaaha). It appears to be more of an abuse, as can be verified from Manu, who does not consider very highly of them.

This is the main caste of Bengal, and has majority population in villages. They are divided into two sub-castes - 'mazi kaivarta', who catch fish or ply boats and 'haali kaivarta', who do farming. A few families from them got some titles and got rich due to some political service rendered by them at some time in the history, and some were kings, sardars and jagirdars.

Some of them were, due to their power or prosperity, 'elevated' by the Brahmin priests to the 'honourable title' of 'nama shudra', meaning, 'shudra for name sake', and given lowest position in hindu society, or nearly made untouchables. In 1943 famine about 30 lakh people who died were mostly from these castes. Nobel laureate Amartya Sen, as is well known, talks of this famine, which was subject of his study.

Muslims

2. Second group is of Muslims. These were also of ancient 'kaivarta' castes. Upto ninth tenth century, here flourished the Buddhist kingdom of Palas. The ancestors of these muslims were Buddhists. But since middle of eleventh century, since Brahmin rule of Sena kings started, there was a period of tremendous atrocities committed against them for about a hundred years. As a result, when Muslims came, these people welcomed them whole heartedly and in a short time, all of them became Muslims. We all know that some brahmanical leaders like Veer Sawarkar, have blamed Buddhists for embracing Islam during this period.

This resulted ultimately in creation of East Pakistan, and now Bangala Desh. Even today Muslims in Bengal are called "Nede", meaning 'bald' because their forefathers were tonsured as Buddhists and were known as "Nede".

Sen dynasty was the first and the last Hindu kingdom, which fell to Bakhtiyar Khilaji, who had a cavalry of only 12 horsemen. How this happened could be the subject matter of another article.

Muslims in Bengal are treated as untouchables. Their condition became worse after Britishers came, because, originally they were dalits, and deprived of education.

Wangals

3. Third group is of Wangals, a name for all people of East Bengal. The separation of East Bengal from rest of Bengal is not because of Muslims, not because of partition of Bengal in 1905, and not because of Indo Pak partition of Bengal in 1947. The credit (?) goes to a valiant Hindu king Ballalsen, who was father of last flee away king Laxmansen.

Reestablishing Brahmin Supremacy

This king Ballalsen, was a learned person. After the fall of Buddhist kingdom of Palas, with an aim of establishing a Brahmin religion from a fresh start, Ballalasen took many new steps including oppression of Buddhists. He divided the country into four areas, with the purpose of establishing kulin system. These areas were

1. "Radha" i.e. western area, the present Vardhaman Division,
2. "Varendra" - Northern area,
3. "Vagadi" - forest lands around the sea in south, and
4. "Vangal" - Eastern Bengal.

The Brahmins in these areas are called Radhi, Varendra, Vangal etc.

Chatterji observes:

"It was the work of the same king, who created four types of Bengalis in Bengal. For this purpose, he did the same thing as every other Hindu king used to do after winning a new territory, to keep his own caste 'pure' or make it so. That is, he called from some famous Brahmin centres like Mithila, Kashi, Prayag or Kanauj a few Brahmin families and settled them in his kingdom, similar to the bull-studs of "Shiva", left by today's pious Hindu devotees to impregnate the cows. So that these people should do their 'work' properly and not interfere in one another's area of interest, he divided the country into four areas as above and settled in each one of them one batch of these 'pure' Brahmins, and relegated the work of increasing the population of 'Arya vamsha' in the three Hindu castes (perhaps meaning - Brahmin, Baidyas and Kayasthas ?). **These people had been doing this work for about eight hundred years without any hindrance.**"

The famous Varendra families are Sanyal, Bagchi, Ghoshal, Mohotra etc. Among Radhis, five families are famous. They call themselves Kanyakubja, i.e. from Kanauj and are called after titles given by the Sena kings, as

Upadhyaya Acharya etc. These names are now corrupted to Chatterji, Mukherji, Banarji, Ganguli and Bhattachari due to English pronunciation in British times.

Chaterji avers: "As mentioned above, from the time of Sena rule, till the middle of 19th century, the main function of all these Brahmins have been to marry hundreds of girls and raise the progeny according to Manu Smruti. **Ballalsen meant only this by 'kulin' system."**

As is well known, to curb the Buddhist practice of becoming a *bhikkhu* and renounce the worldly affairs in young age, it is enjoined by the Brahmanic sastras that out of four ashramas, the *grahasta ashram* is the most important, and here one has to repay the four debts. One of them is to have a progeny, when man becomes free from the father's debt. But this Kulin system was quite different from method of repaying the 'father's debt'.

Child's caste was decided by the mother's caste. But some times, the progeny of so called low caste Brahmins also could get high caste because of wealth. Many Kayasthas became rich and adored themselves with *'yadnopavita'* and became the *'dwijas'* calling themselves as Kshatriyas. That way, the place of Kayasthas in Bengal's varna system is among the Shudras, as Chaterji says.

These hundreds of wives of Brahmins used to reside with their parents. Their husbands used to wander from place to place doing *bhajan* etc. and visit them may be once or twice a year. This was enough for procreation and propagation of race. Thus within a few generations, a vast corps of Brahmin progeny was created, which became the main support of Brahmin religion and became quite distinct from the original inhabitants of Bengal.

During Muslim rule, second work of these people was to prevent the widow remarriage and implement the 'sati' system rigorously. In north India, sati was limited to only royal families, but in Bengal, these Brahmins got it implemented cruelly. The reason was obvious. This strictness was necessary for the safety of husbands, as each of them had hundreds of wives. With the ban on widow remarriage and practice of sati, no dissatisfied wife could dare to poison the husband. **No widow could save her property from the clutches of the Brahmins, because only Brahmin could condone the performance of sati. This condonation used to cost a lot.**

Kayasthas always learnt language of the rulers. In Muslim rule they learnt

their language, and became parts of state machinery. They earned so much money, that though in the eyes of Brahmins they were sudras, still they could employ Brahmins as their servants for worship etc. The Baidyas also followed Kayashthas and Brahmins. But the fact remains, which is well known that, in the brahmanic books of middle ages, a lot of abuse is showered over kayasthas as well as on baidyas.

Every Ambedkarite needs to know the history of these people, for two reasons. Firstly, the mechanisms of Brahmanic atrocities always affects the women and Shudras, and secondly, these were the people to whom we should be grateful for Ambedkar's entry in Constituent Assembly.

Everybody knows how Dr. Ambedkar was prevented from getting into the Constituent Assembly from Maharashtra and he had to go to Bengal and on the votes of these so called 'chandals', he entered the Constituent Assembly. As Ambedkarites, we have a lot of respect for these people because they, under the leadership of Jogendra Nath Mandal, were the people who got Dr. Ambedkar elected to Constituent Assembly. **For this 'treacherous' act of theirs, we understand, their area was given to East Pakistan, as a punishment, though a non-Muslim area.** We also like to understand more about this aspect. And a research into partition of Bengal needs to be undertaken, and is a subject matter for another paper.

Chapter 10

USE OF SEX BY BRAHMINS TO GAIN SUPREMACY

At least two very obvious instances are seen in Indian society where Brahmins used Sex as tool to create and maintain their supremacy over other castes. One case is in Bengal where during rule of Pala Kings public had virtually ceased to follow the Brahmanic religion and the Sena kings who followed the Palas imported a few Brahmin families from Brahmanic centres and gave them facilities to establish huge families by a system of what came to be called "Kulinism", which was discussed in earlier Chapter. The other case is of Kerala where they established what is known as "Sambandham" type of marriages, which having persisted for centuries, just recently have become the events of the past.

Main stream was not Vedic

Contrary to modern propaganda, that main stream is "Hindu / Aryan / Brahmanic", it must be emphasized that in ancient India it was the Naga Culture that predominated. Shri H. L. Kosare quotes the opinions of Datta Ray Chaudhari and Majumdar that, the main basis of Indian social cultural system is presumed to be Vedic Culture. This presumption is baseless, and this opinion can not be accepted. There is no doubt that, the Indus valley culture played a great role in the development and preservation of Indian culture. [Kosare: 1989: 263] Similar views are expressed by Gail Omvedt also.

India was a Naaga Bhumi

Dr. Ambedkar has shown that India was a "Naga Bhumi" and Dravidian culture the main Culture. Kosare's views on Rajwade based on *Rajtarangini*, and Mahabharata and story of *Sarpa Yajnya* and marriage of Arjuna with Ulupi are already discussed previously. Similarly Views of Prof. T.A Gopinath Rao, who has agreed that majority of Buddhists were Nagas, but refuted that Nayars were Nagas and who calls "The hypothesis is more fictitious and fanciful than real and tenable." [T. A. Gopinath Rao: 1985: 554], was also discussed previously. Prof. Rao, who does not forget to categorically mention that Nayars were Shudras, finds the theory untenable, without assigning any reasons. Is it prejudice of caste or arrogance of culture?

Certainly, the Nayars were the original inhabitants of the region, they did not come from outside. Before the Brahmins came from the North and establish *'sambamdhams'* with the Kerala maidens, and thus dominate the Nayar community, the original people inhabiting the region were definitely the Nagas. From 'Naga' they could have become 'Nayar'. Anyway, the fact remains that the Nagas became Buddhist in great numbers, and certainly todays Indian society is made up of and is developed from the erstwhile aboriginal tribal people, is a fact recognized by all the scholars, whether one accepts that the word 'Nayar' might have come from 'Naga' or not.

As already mentioned, the relations of Nayars with low caste Pullayas, who were undoubtably Buddhists and Nagas originally, can also be judged by a well known, custom of so called "Pullaya scare", where a Nayar woman had to go with a Pullaya man, if touched by him outside the house while alone, during one month in a year after Makar Sankrati. This custom was banned by the British, and is recorded by a Portuguese traveler Barbodosa.

There was a casteless society among the Naga culture

The non-Aryan Naga people were believers in Buddhistic social culture. During their rule, there was a society based on social equality in India, because their cultural values were influenced by the Buddhist traditions. This social system of Nagas, even in those early days, is noteworthy in contrast to Brahmanical social system of inequality. It is unfortunate that the modern high caste scholars, while narrating the greatness of ancient Indian culture, ignore this fact. Shri H. L. Kosare has shown as the Naga society was based on equal status, casteless social order was the main basis of social system of Nagas. As the Naga culture was based on Buddha's principles of equality, it received the status of Buddha's religion. Thus, Naga culture played the greatest role in the process of establishing a casteless egalitarian and integrated society in Indian cultural life. [Kosare: 1989: 256]

"A. L. Basham has shown that there is no mention of caste anywhere in ancient Tamil literature. But after Aryan influence increased, and political and social system became more complex, caste system which was somewhat more severe than in north, evolved even here. ('The wonder that was India', Rupa & Co., 1975, p.151) The period of Sangam literature is third century A.D., **This shows that during the Satavahana rule there was no caste system."** [Kosare: 1989: 251]

Nagas had their Republics

We have already discussed how their social system was public oriented, and unlike the Brahmanical system, their political system also was designed to give social justice to all sections of people. Kosare observes that during first four centuries of Christian era, the central regions in India comprised of strong Republics of Nagas. It was Samudragupta, who destroyed these republics. About the system of administration of Bharshiv Nagas, Dr. K. P. Jaiswal has observed that their social system was based on the principles of equality. There was no place for any caste system in them. They all belonged to one and the same caste. [Kosare: 1989: 251] Kosare further explains that, the independent kingdoms of Nagas in South India came together and formed an independent federal republic, which was termed as Fanimandal or Nagamandal. This Cheromandal republic of Nagas of South India was very powerful and indivisible at the time of Periplus, i.e. in 80 A.D. Later during Ptolemy's times, i.e. 150 A.D., north eastern part of Tondemandalam became separate. (Dr. J. P. Jain, *bharatiya itihas*, p. 239). This Cheromandal or Fanimandal was a federation of separate kingdoms of Nagas coming together to form a united national federation. **"In reality, it was a united Naga Nation of South India", avers Kosare!** [Kosare: 1989:179]

Satavahanas were Buddhists and not of Brahmanic faith

Because Goutamiputra Satkarni performed the ?yajnyas? , some scholars tend to think that he belonged to Brahmanic faith. This is a wrong interpretation. They were in fact Buddhists. The nature of yadnyas performed by him was political. Shri Kosare avers:

"Satvahanas were not Brahmanic, they were Kshatriyas of Naga race. Nanaghat inscription of Naganika (Journal of Bombay Royal Asiatic Society, vol. 13, 1870, p.311) mentions yadnyas being performed by Goutamiputra Satkarni. **The nature of these Vedic yadnyas must be considered as a political act of a Kshatriya to raise ones own political prestige, status and glory as an Emperor.** These yadnyas had absolutely no Brahmanic effect on the republican style of their social culture in Satvahana times. Similarly, there are no records to show that any other king of Satvahana dynasty performed any Vedic sacrifices. On the contrary, it appears that Buddhism flourished and developed to a great extent during the Satvahana period only." [Kosare: 1989: 167]

Panch Dravidas

The word Dravida or Dramida of Sanskrit was originally in Pali "Damila", from which Tamil has come, applies to a family of languages including various minor dialects, and loosely applied to five "Pancha-dravidas", as per ancient Tamil tradition, to comprise along with Tamil including Malayalam, Telugu, Kannada, also Marathi and Gujarathi. [p.537, (Cambridge history of India vol. I - CHI)]

In South India various aboriginal people lived long before Aryans came. Among them were the "Nagas", a term applied by Tamil classical poets to "war like race armed with bows and nooses and famous as free booters". Many tribes belonged to this race, like Aruvalar, Eyinar, Maravar, Oliyar and Paradavar. [CHI, p.539]

Prior to arrival of Brahmins to Kerala, along with the rest of South India, the land of Kerala was predominantly a Buddhist country. Famous sociologist, Balkrishna Nair avers in these terms:

"There are, however, strong evidences to prove that Buddhism prevailed over the entire length and breadth of Kerala and that Brahmanism began to take root in the soil only with the growth in prestige of the Nambudri Brahmins - the representatives of the pure Rig Vedic Brahmins. The colonisation of Kerala by these Rig Vedic Brahmins must have in all probability taken place during the Vedic age. **But all evidences go to prove that they became a social force in ancient Kerala society only about the eighth century A.D."** [Nair: 1959: 8]

Nayars were Nagas

Nair further expounds the theory which was found "untenable" by Prof. Rao, in these words:

"Present day Kerala formed part of the ancient Cherai country. "Cherai" is the Tamil word for the Sanskrit word "Naga". There are far too many references in Sanskrit literature to prove that the Nagas were the oldest tribes in India before the Aryans retained friendly contact. A subsect of the "Nagars" or members of the "Naga" tribe who lived in Malabar may well have been called "Nayars" just as their confrers in the Nepal valley came to be called "Newars" Mahabharata (Karnaparva 2, XIV) speaks of the Newars among whom property descended in the female line as it once did among the Arattas, Bahika or Takhas of the Punjab whose sister' sons and not their own were their heirs." [Nair: 1959: 8]

L. D. Barnet confirms that Buddhism and Jainism in South India kept Brahmanic culture away from the South Indian regions quite late, when he avers:

"... south seems to have felt little influence from the Aryan culture of Northern India. A few colonies had made their way into the south, ... but on the whole they counted for little in the life of the people, **especially as their teachings were counter balanced by the influence of the powerful Buddhist and Jain churches, and Dravidian society was still free from the yoke of the Brahman caste system.** (f.n.) The tradition that the Brahman sage Agastya led the first Aryan colony to Podiya Hill and created Tamil literature probably arose in a later age, after Brahman influence had gained the ascendant in the south, on the basis of the legends in the Sanskrit epics." [CHI, p.540]

Megasthenese mentions about rumours that Heracles (i.e. god Siva) put south under rule of his daughter 'Pandaia'. Epics mention them as 'foreign lands'. Ashoka's edicts mention them as "foreign nations who have accepted the teachings of Buddhism". [Barnet, CHI, p. 541]

This should be enough to show that Buddhism was a living faith in south before the Brahmins came there. Our purpose here is to show how they succeeded in establishing Brahmin supremacy in a Buddhist land during the days of general decline of Buddhism and after the fall of Buddhism became masters of whole population making them slaves.

Nayars in historical times

Mahadev Shastri Joshi, (ed) in "Bharatiya Sanskriti Kosh", (Marathi) vol. V, (MSK) gives details of Nayars, their manners, customs and culture. The following is the summery.

Since early history, Nayars are known as warrior caste and in their childhood, Nayar boys are trained in martial arts in institutions called "Kalari". They played very important role in military history of Kerala. **They are supposed to be original inhabitants of Kerala.** When legendary Parashurama reached Kerala annihilating the Kshatriyas, he met Nayars and looking at their bravery, repented having fought with them even though they were not Kshatriyas. He ordered them to remove their sacred thread. This is the story in "Keralotpatti" [MSK, p.48]

Some scholars believe that these are same people, who are mentioned in Puranas as "Nagas" [MSK, p.48]

Their social system was matriarchal and not patriarchal. Mother is the central figure in the family, and her progeny is known by her "gotra". Daughter, even after her marriage, remains in the mother's house and her husband comes every night to her house for sleeping. Authority of maternal uncle is greater than the paternal uncle. The heirs to property are matrilineal, the legacy going to his sisters' sons and not his own. This system is called "Maru-makka-tayam". Even the kingship or priesthood devolves in this fashion. Kingship of Trivankur-Kochin is the same. [MSK, p.49]

Tarwad

The family is called a Tarwad. Their residences are fort like huge houses having hundred to two hundred inhabitants, living for generations. All men and women have a common right to the property, and partition does not take place. Each Tarwad is an independent and self contained colony. It has a big house in the centre surrounded by flower and fruit garden. There is a barn house and a lake. Remarkably, on the north west corner there is a place for serpents called "Sarpa kavu". The trees, hedges and shrubs there are never cut. Occasionally there is a small shrine for Kuldaivata there. There is also a cremation ground in the south east corner. Rooms on the north side in the house are for unmarried girls and newly delivered women and rooms on south are meant for elderly women. Every girls gets an independent bed room after marriage. Men and women live separately. [MSK, p.49]

Their dress

Except on festivals, men use *"muntu"* around waist, and an under garment and a *"pancha"*, garment on shoulder. Women wear a delicate and clean white garment called *"puduva"* from waist to knees. Part above waist is uncovered. On festival days every one gets new clothes. Previously, Nayar women, even in royal families, considered it lowly to cover the chest. Then they started using *"urovastra"* and after a time even the *"choli"*. Now a days there is a great change in their dress. [MSK, p.49] Thanks to the British education.

Important sanskaras in Nayar girl's life

There are three important events in the life of Nayar girls. They are *Tali-kettu-kalyanam, Terundukuli* and *Sambandham.*

Tali-kettu-kalyanam: Before she attains puberty, this is celebrated. The main function is tying a *"tali"* by a selected groom boy called *"manwalan"*, who ties it around the neck of the girl ceremoniously with pomp and show. Then the couple is taken to a decorated room. For three days they are not to leave the house. Fourth day they are taken in a precession to lake for a bath. When they return, they eat in the same leaf. Afterwards their one garment is cut into two and they exchange the pieces. This signifies the end of their relationship. [MSK, p.50]

One *manwalan* can tie *tali* to many girls. Some times Brahmin boys are selected to tie the *tali*. Some times mother of the girl ties the tali. After this ceremony, the girl can have "sambandham" with any boy or even *manwalan* himself. Sometimes his consent to marry others is necessary. If *manwalan* dies, she has to observe 15 days mourning, but not if he is a Brahmin. [MSK, p. 51]

Terundukuli: Is a ceremony celebrated when the girl attains puberty and gets her first menstrual period. [MSK, p.51]

Sambandham: is the main function in the life of a Nayar woman. On an auspicious evening, the groom coming in procession is welcomed by the brides' relatives. Under great pomp and show and merry making, the groom presents nine, eleven, seventeen or twenty one garments to the bride and everyone sprinkles *akshata* over the couple. The bride and the groom spend the night in a decorated room. The next morning the groom goes back to his own house. After Sambandham, the girl stays in her own tarwad, and her husband comes every night to her and returns back to his house every morning.

In middle ages, the sambandham in royal families was conducted without much fanfare. The girls from royal families could have sambandham only with Nambudiri Brahmin youth, who were usually maintained by the kings only. [MSK, p.52]

The husband and wife live together as long as they wish. Woman can get divorce any time she likes, and man too can stop coming to her if he gets tired of her. Both of them can remarry again. Woman can marry again if husband dies. [MSK, p.52] If a woman is staying in her husband's house in patriarchal tarwad and the man dies, the widow is first sent back to her own Tarwad before funeral. [MSK, p.53]

Previously, the system of polyandry prevailed. After "talikettu kalyanam" a Nayar girl was free to live with a man of her choice. In north Malabar, to have relation with one man at a time was the customary rule, but in south Malabar, woman got more respect if she had more lovers, however, it was customary that this number should not exceed more than ten or twelve. The men used to arrange their turns and also divide the expenses. Men also were free to have relationship with many women. When a woman returned the clothes given to her, he understood the relationship is finished. Many times, a number of Nayar brothers had only one common wife among themselves. [MSK, p. 53]

Recent changes

With the advent of western civilization, Nayars disliked the Tarwad system and they inclined towards patriarchal system. They started the struggle to have legal sanction to each traditionally married individual couple. Ultimately, in 1912, Travancore Ruler had to pass a new Act. According to this Law, all marriages of Nayars were considered legal in all respects, everyone got a right to share the income of the Tarwads, the responsibility of maintenance of wife fell on the husband. Polygamy and polyandry were both declared illegal. Revolutionary changes took place among the Nayar society. Within five years of passing the Law, about forty thousand Tarwads divided their property. The sons started becoming the heirs instead of sisters' sons. After some times, there was a slight movement, which could not succeed, to abolish this law as they thought it was not beneficial to them and has caused dissensions. Though there are remnants of the system in a few villages, practically the system has disappeared from the cities. Today, as per the Constitution of India, women got equal rights as men, the thinkers consider matriarchal system unnecessary. [MSK, p.54]

Nayars accept Brahmin supremacy

The Nayars being warrior people fighting in Chera, Chola and Pandya armies, the petty chieftains fought among themselves for petty aggrandizement causing mortality and maiming and consequent discontentment. They were ordinary tribal people having a premitive religion of serpent worship. They were like any other tribe like Vellalas. Their language was an ill formed dialect of Tamil. Nayars showed open hostility to culture of Sangam literature. Nayars of south Travencore showed arrogance towards Nanchinad Vellalas. The Pillais among the

Nanchinad Vellalas had influence of Tamil Brahmins and Kannada 'Pottis' and merged with Nayars. [Nair: 1959: 11 ff.]

The reasons how a section of Nayars accepted Nambudiri Brahmins are given by Bal Krishna Nair [Nair: 1959: 13 ff.]

"... the Brahmins could only influence the marginal section of the Nayars and that their social control became complete only through stages across the long years of Kerala history and consolidated through the Kshatriya rulers and chieftains, whom the Brahmins raised in exceptional cases to Brahmanical status. Status or rank in the social structure of caste was conferred on a group by the Brahmins only in proportion to which the group voluntarily assimilated Brahmanical cultural influences. [Nair: 1959: 13]

"...The practice of *thalikettu*, and *sambandham* unions if not introduced by the Nambudiri Brahmin, was certainly made popular by him and he enjoyed the *jus primae noctis* with the young Nayar bride and initiated her in her sexual life to come. Further the system of polyandry and *"Marumakkathayam"* must have afforded easy opportunities for the Nambudiri Brahmin to enter the social hierarchy with the self-assumed role of the uppermost class. He was in many respect uniquely fit to play this role. He had knowledge of the Vedas and Shastras. He was physically attractive to the Nayar women. His notions of mantra, tantra and knowledge of Ayurveda endowed him with the classic qualities of a cultural conqueror. The Nambudiri was naturally sympathetic in the extreme with those dissident groups of Nayars who were amenable to their cultural fertilisation. They would have gone to any extent in conferring on them higher status in the caste hierarchy except of course "status among their own kind." Thus the dissident groups of the marginal class spoken of above were given varying status by the Nambudiris as Brahmanical sub- castes, upper class Shudras etc. When the Brahmanical mythology was codified by the astute Nambudiris in "Keralotpathi", these castes were listed in the order of their precedence and a social structure of caste was introduced with hierarchical gradation. **All these were done in an effort to break up a socially integrated community and establish their Brahmanical social control. In this way the social disequilibrium of Kerala was completed by the Brahmins by the creation of marginal and sub-marginal groups within the fold of an erstwhile socially integrated community.** The fragmentation of social feeling that it led to in subsequent centuries with the multiplication of castes and sub-castes is too well-known and too

common a characteristic of the other region of the country, as to require any special mention. Reformist leaders such as Swami Vivekananda found Kerala a mad house full of castes and sub- caste of an endless variety." [Nair: 1959: 13]

"What was originally a cultural fertilisation with the malcontents of a socially integrated community had thus eventually developed into a cultural conquest over the entire community. It is, however wrong to think that the Brahmins through contact with non-Brahmin were unduly influenced by the latter to any extent in respect of cultural traits. In fact it never happened anywhere in India with the conscious acquiescence of the Brahmins themselves. It was the non-Brahmin who was influenced most by the Sanskritic modes of thought and mythology. ..." [Nair: 1959: 15]

Position of Nayars vis a vis Brahmins

Prof. G. S. Ghurye explains it as:

"Among the people of Kerala, a Nayar may approach a Nambudiri Brahmin but must not touch him; while a Tiyan must keep himself at a distance of thirty-six steps from the Brahmin, a Pulayan may not approach him within ninety-six paces. ..." [Ghurye: 1969: 10]

Restrictions on marriage

Prof. G.S.Ghurye observes that only there are two exceptions to marrying within the subcaste. One is in Punjab and other in Malabar, about which he says:

"... while in Malabar, the younger sons of the Nambudiri and other Brahmins consort with the Kshatriya and Nayar women, among whom mother rights prevails. ..." [Ghurye: 1969: 18]

It is noteworthy that only the younger sons are allowed to have 'sambandham' with Nayar brides, and the eldest of the family has to marry within the caste. Prof Ghurye quotes Kathleen Gough who also states that among the Nambudiris only the eldest son was ordinarily allowed to marry within the caste. [Ghurye:1969:340]

Reasons for breakdown of System of Sambandham

M. S. A. Rao, one of research students of Prof Ghurye, gave three reasons: Social malaise of the traditional Malabar society had begun about A.D. 1743. Around 1800 A.D. there was disbanding of Nayar militia by the British, as mentioned by Gough. Kochin ruler's restrictions coming later hastened the breakdown. But the main reason, he thinks was the unrest among the Brahmins. About the unrest among the Nambudiris, Ghurye says:

"The unrest among the Nambudiris, too, must have counted for a bit. The strain of keeping away the younger males of the caste from the Nambudiri females combined with the problem of the aging spinsters did count for something, for some atmosphere of needed change!" [Ghurye: 1969:340]

It is noteworthy, that none of them think that the rise of sense of pride among the Nayars, the real sufferers of the system, had any bearing on the causes of abolition. On the contrary, these Brahmanic scholars **allude that the Brahmins were the sufferers of this System.** It is forgotten that the Brahmin youths did have their own Brahmin wives, the Nayar girls being their additional wives. As a matter of fact, history proves that the yoke of slavery is thrown away by the sufferers only when slaves get the realization of their slavery.

Difference between Christian and Brahmin Conquest

Christians also came later but could only convert a few untouchables. Claim of St. Thomas converting Nambudiris is not believed by Shri Nair, who labels it as Missionaries' gimmick 'in the same way as the Nambudiris themselves had played up the Parsurama traditions and had succeeded.' He further avers:

"But unlike the Christian efforts at proselytisation, the cultural conquest of the Brahmin was peculiarly intimate process in Kerala. **It was in fact such wherever it took place in India.** It required that not only the Brahmin to "understand and adjust himself to the values and sentiments of those that he wanted to conquer but also that he participated in many of their activities on a level as near as possible to equality". This was essential for the status-value without which success was impossible. **Nambudiri Brahmins not only married Nayar women but also kept only Nayar servants at home and Nayar women in company of their women.** The relation thus established in the domestic sphere was not quite that of master and servant but that of inter-dependence based on

status-value in order to enforce social control over the leading Nayar communities." [Nair:1959: 16]

Why they could not retain their hold even today?

Nair gives the main reason that under the **influence of western education,** property relations underwent rapid changes and they could not keep their enormous estates. Also there were social changes. He observes:

"The closed upper-class family system with its undue emphasis on primogeniture and contemptuous negligence of the sexual rights of female members by condemning them to life- long maidenhood if the Nambudiri husbands were not forthcoming to marry them, accelerated their degeneration." [Nair: 1959: 17]

Shri Nair quotes Prof. Arthur W. Lewis's view that "A healthy upper class biologically is one which allows its weaker members to fall into lower classes and which in each generation recruits the more successful members of the lower classes into its own ranks." and observes:

"... There have been instances in some other parts of India chiefly the Tamilanad where **under the leadership of Ramanujacharya the Brahmins accepted vertical mobility as an article of faith for purposes of sheer survival.** It was this more than the inherent strength of the group the permitted it to survive economic changes and adapt itself in some measure at least to altered modes of earning livelihood, different at any rate form their traditional mode of life as the priesthood. But the Nambudiri Brahmin of Kerala lacked the imaginative adaptability of his confrere in Tamilnad and consequently his days were numbered even during the first decade of the present century." [Nair: 1959: 18]

"The truth of this observation will be amply borne out by a study of the circumstances that led to the Nayar Regulation Act in Travancore and the Marumakkathyam Act of Malabar 1933 and its subsequent development and also by a study of the emigration of educated Malayalis beyond the borders of their homeland and also beyond the frontiers of India to Iran, Iraq, South Africa, East Africa, Burma, Ceylon, Malaya and even to far off Sarawak and Borneo. In fact the circumstances were identical when the Nayars were recruited in large numbers to the Vijayanagar army.The wives of these soldiers may not have accompanied them in large numbers so that when they finally settled down in the empire they must have taken

to local wives and forgotten their matriarchal tradition. **This explains why the Nayars and Naidus, though of identical stock, have different social traditions today.**" [Nair: 1959: 20]

"Theoretically then we might ask why the Brahmins could not achieve a military conquest and achieve ethnoexpanisionism on the lines of the Romans in the Colonies, or the Spaniards in Latin America or on the basis of something similar to the modern notion of the "white man's burden" in the Colonies? **The answer is the Brahmins in the initial stages of their cultural conquest had only an intense apostolic motivation unaccompanied by the resources to organise themselves into armed bands.** Indeed it is much later history when they were finally successful in entrenching themselves as a religious oligarchy within the kingdom of a "Kshatriyas" prince and goading him to undertake religious wars and expansion through "Aswamedhayagas". Similarly the Nambudiri Brahmin in ancient Malabar could have only attempted a peaceful cultural conquest through astute ways and not through force as he was himself bereft of the means to compel the Nayars to follow his ways except that of persuasion through example and precept." [Nair: 1959: 10]

Interpretation of story of Parashurama

The story of Parsurama has a strong bearing on Brahmin - non Brahmin struggle in India and needs further research by sufferers. Some legends are also mentioned in chapter of Devadasis. Here we quote from Nair two views, those of Ghurye and D. D. Kosambi:

"The story of Parashurama is worth recalling in this context. He is supposed to have avenged his father's murder by overpowering the Kshatriyas by their own military weapon. Dr. G. S. Ghurye reads into the story the desire of the Brahmins to show that the Brahmin's wrong would not go unavenged. Second, to impress the fact that the Brahmins if they took to arms, would prove themselves immensely superior to the Kshatriyas in warfare and last to humiliate the Kshatriyas." See Caste and Class in India, Bombay, 1957, p.70.

Dr. D. D. Kosambi's interpretation is equally interesting:

"The excessive and self contradictory annihilation (of Kshatriyas) is clearly psychological overcompensation for Brahmin helplessness in the face of Kshatriya dominance. Parsurama is promoted in the Bhrugu inflated Mahabharata to the status of a Vishnu incarnation. The tension between

priest and chief is an undercurrent in Vedic literature thereafter, though both combined against the other two castes." [Dr.D.D. Kosambi in *An introduction to the Study of Indian History*, (Bombay, 1956), p.113 - Nair: 1959: 11]

This is the story how Nayars, who at one time were the Buddhist Nagas and the most famous warrior race of South India, were subdued by the Brahmins.

Chapter 11

DEVADASIS WERE DEGRADED BUDDHIST NUNS

What is the Devadasi System

Perhaps the most horrible effect of fall of Buddhism in ancient India, which is haunting us even today, is the start of devadasi system. The system of votive offering of girls to the deities in Brahmanic temples is a system found in all parts of India, but was more prevalent in the south. In some parts of Maharashtra and Karnataka it is still prevalent and has become a source of exploitation of lower castes. Though they had a glorious past, these girls are now a days degraded to the status of cheap prostitutes. The saying in Marathi goes, *"Devadasi devachi bayako sarya gavachi"*, meaning that she is servant of god but wife of the whole town. This is the lot of such a woman. She has to remain unmarried, and maintain herself by ceremonial begging, a system called "jogava" in Marathi, to get both ends meet. With "chal" (a string of small bells) in her feet, she carries the "jag" (a metal mask of god) in a "pardi" (a basket) on her head and begs whole life, or ends up in a brothel.

The term devadasi is a Sanskrit term denoting female servant of deity, but they are known by different names in different areas. Jogan Shankar gives the names by which they are known in various parts, such as Maharis in Kerala, Natis an Assam, Muralis in Maharashtra, Basavis in Karnataka State. [p.16] Though the name 'devadasi' is popular, in Goa they use the term `Bhavanis'. `Kudikar' on the West-Cost `Bhogam-Vandhi' or `Jogin' in Andhra Pradesh; Thevardiyar' in Tamil Nadu; `Murali', 'Jogateen' and 'Aradhini' in Maharashtra. In Karnataka, old devadasis are called as `Jogati' and young devadasis as `Basavi'. The term `Basavi' refers to feminine form of `Basava' a bull which roams the village at will without any restriction. Hence `Basavi' alludes to the foot loose position of the woman. [Jogan Shankar: 1990: 157]

The rite of Initiation

This cult is prevalent even today throughout India with some regional variances. When a girl is dedicated to or married not to a mortal-man

but to an idol, deity or object of worship or to a temple, some rite is performed. About the rite of initiation, it is stated that, unlike old times, such ceremonies are now a days performed rather secretly without much fanfare at smaller temples or local priests' residences, rather than big temples of Yellamma like at Savadatti or Kokatnur, to avoid the expenses and also to escape clutches of law. The expenses are borne either by the 'would be' companion or paramour or the "Gharwalis" (mistresses of urban brothels) where these girls who would be expected to join their brothel in future. [Jogan Shankar: 1990: 99]

The vows at the time of initiation include the warning to parents or brothers that this girl will have a right in their property. Then the priest addresses the girl to be dedicated and seeks some set answers, to which the girl has to agree.

"Priest: Look! Hereafter you cannot claim a right of wife with any man. You have to fast on Tuesday and Friday and beg on those days holding a Joga in your hand. You happen to see a calf, sucking its mother you should not forcibly withdraw the calf. If a cow grazes the crop before you, you shall not drive it away. You shall not speak untruth. If you are feeling hungry don't tell others so and ask for food. Offer shelter to shelterless and strangers. Provide food to those who are hungry and water to the thirsty. Help the helpless people. If anybody abuses you and beats you, never retaliate. If you come across with an event of death you have to take bath, visit the temple of Yellamma. Only after worshiping the deity you are supposed to take meals. You should not eat 'Yenjalu' (left out food) of somebody. You shall chant "Udho Yellamma" (Glory to Yellamma) all the time." [Jogan Shankar: 1990: 101]

Devadasi customs

Swami Dharma teertha quotes the plight of these womwn, by an author in 1914 writing about South Indian temples describes the respect these girls received as daughter of the deity; that the goldsmiths and weavers of Trichinopoly devote the eldest daughter of the family to the temple service of Srirangam, in young age and taught preliminaries of profession. At the age of thirteen they go through the ceremony of marriage with the god Subramania who is represented by

stone or image or by a figure. After the ceremony they are ready to ply their trade of prostitution, their earnings going to swell the temple revenue." [Swami Dharmatirtha, p. 139]

Dedication to Gods meant Brahmins

Lands and women dedicated to temples, in the names of gods, they were actually meant for bhudevas, as Swamiji mentions:

"We should know that dedication for the gods meant dedication for the maintenance of the worshipping Brahmans who, because they so worshipped, were called *"devalas"* and were all but outcastes among Brahmans; a fact showing the not very reputable origin and character of such worship and worshippers, the maintenance of servants, female slaves, dancing girls and musicians and providing of the articles of worship." [Swami Dharmatirtha, p. 139]

Fate of Devadasis

After initiation, the ceremony of 'the first night' is celebrated. It is called 'Uditumbuvadu'. Previously the right belonged to the priest but now a days, it is well publicized within the clientele of businessmen and rich landlords. One who deflowers her gets right to her over others for the rest of her life but neither she nor the children of such union have any right over him, or his property. He can leave her any time. She has to lead a life of a cheap prostitute either near about or at metropolitan brothels. By the time her market value goes down, and she is thrown out of business, she becomes a habitat for a number of diseases including may be AIDS, and ends up in some village corner, desolate, rejected, friendless and rots to death.

Caste distribution of Devadasis

It is well known that majority of devadasis are from dalit community. According to the research conducted by Prof. Baba Saheb Ghatge for his M. Phil. the percentage of castes in Kolhapur district of Maharashtra is as follows:

Mahar (SC) - 53%, Maratha - 30%, Matang (SC) - 10%, Gurav (OBC) - 2%, Sutar (OBC) - 1%, Dhangar (OBC) - 1%, Parit (OBC) - 1%, Khatik

(OBC) - 1%, Bhoi (NT) - 1% [Ghatge:1996]

The 30% among Marathas, which is not a backward caste, is rather surprising, and in my opinion is indicative of common origin of Dalits and Marathas, as was explained by Dr. Ambedkar in "The Untouchables".

Even in those places, where worship of Yellama is in vogue by other castes, the devadasis are all dalits. Jogan Shankar observes:

"In Yellampura village almost everybody worships Yellamma deity. A dominant caste like Lingayats acknowledge Yellamma as their family deity. But at the time of survey it was found that no single upper caste woman was dedicated to the deity. However, knowledgeable elderly persons revealed that there were a few devadasis among other castes like Talawar, Gurav and Kurubar castes. But at present no devadasi is found among these castes. As ritual status of such women came down and functional relation with temple almost terminated, members belonging to other castes abandoned the practice but lower castes like ex-untouchable including Holers, Madars and Samagars continued the practice. Among Samagar caste there is only one devadasi who is about 70 years old. Since then no new initiation has taken place in the caste. Samagars are placed above the remaining ex- untouchable castes. The whole devadasi population is concentration among Holers and Madars only." [Jogan Shankar: 1990: 159]

Legends to support Devadasi system

To keep the bahujans and dalits under control, it was necessary that the stories are manufactured and incorporated in various mahatmyas in the Puranas. There are three important legends, we should know about. It may be useful to see what the traditional stories told by the brahmins and believed to be true by the sufferers themselves. Vasant Rajas, an active Ambedkarite struggling against the Devadasi custom, has given the account of various legends in Puranas concerning this practice. [Vasant Rajas: 1997: 74] The following is the summary of it.

Legend of Renuka or Yallamma

One of the important legends concerned is about Renuka Devi. It seems to be an addition to the well known story of Parasurama. The

story of Parsurama is interpreted in many ways, by different scholars. But there is an inherent contradiction in his story, which no scholar seems to have pointed out. The main concern of Arjuna on the battle field was of 'varna sankar' i.e. inter caste marriages. If you kill the ksatriyas, the widows are likely to have 'varna sankar' which destroys the 'dharma'. The Lord says he takes avatara to establish the 'dharma' meaning 'chatur-varnya- dharma' by killing the 'wicked', meaning those who do not follow this dharma. Parasurama is said to be an avatara. How does Parasuram deserve the status of avatara, when he himself killed the ksatriyas 21 times, and ultimately led to 'varna sankara'? But such questions are not to be asked to the brahmins. Let it be as it may, we come back to the legend.

According to legend, Renuka appeared from the fire pit of 'putra kameshti' yadnya performed by a kshatriya king Renukeswara. She was married to Rishi Jamdagni. The couple had five sons including Parasurama. One morning she was late in coming home from the river as she was sexually aroused by watching the love play in river, of a Gandarva raja with his queens. This enraged Jamdagni who ordered his sons to kill her. All other sons refused and were burned to ashes by rishi's curse, but Parsurama beheaded her. The rishi gave him three boons. By first, Parshurama asked to bring back to life his four brothers. By second he wanted his mother to be made alive. But her head was not available. So Parshurama cut the head of a woman from 'matang' caste, and Jamdagni revived his wife with the matangi's head. By third he wished to be free from the sin of matricide. But Renuka was cursed by Jamdagni to have leprosy and was banished from the hermitage. However, she got cured by some 'Eknatha', 'Jognatha' sadhus in the forest. She returned back to Jamdagni who pardoned her and blessed her that she will attain great fame in Kaliyuga.

Later a King Sahstrarjuna killed Jamdagni on Full moon day of Magha, and Renuka became a widow. This day is called "Rand Punav" - a widow's full moon day. "Rand" is a derogatory word meaning widow as well as a prostitute. According to Hindu customs, Renuka broke down her bangles on death of Jamdagni on this day. So all the devadasis on that day assemble in the temple of Yellama at Soundatti, to break down their bangles.

Later Parsurama invaded Kartvirya Sahasrarjuna, killed him and brought back 'kamdhenu' along with the head of this king. On his prayer of god, his father Jamdagni again became alive, so Renuka again became a 'suhagan' - a married woman - and put back on her green bangles. So the Devadasis put on bangles (chuda) on this day - the full moon day of Chaitra, so this day is called 'chudi punav'. A 'choundak' was made out of the skull of Sahasrarjuna, so the devadasis use this musical instrument while begging a 'jogava'.

Parsurama went on rampage destroying and annihilating the kshatriyas twenty one times. He killed even the children in the womb of pregnant women. So these women started running around. Their garments fell down till they approached Renuka, who advised them to wear branches of 'nim' tree around their waist and pray Parsurama, saying 'udho udho udho'. (so 'nagna-puja'). Since then the people became devotees of Yellamma and started offering their girls as devdasis and boys as 'jogte', the male counterpart of devdasi.

Temple of Renuka was built in 13th century in Soundati hills. The Jains believe that Renuka is their 'Padmawati'. For centuries, the devotees of Renuka, who are mostly dalits and bahujans, assemble there twice a year on Magha and Chaitra full moon days for pilgrimage, offer their daughters to make them devdasis.

B. S. Kamble from Sangali dist. mentions the influence of blind faith over dalits to an extent that a backward class member of legislature had established a shrine of Renuka image in Bombay Mantralaya. ["Sugawa", marathi journal, Ambedkar prerana issue, December 1998, p. 51]

Legend of Renukamba

There is a temple of Renukaamba, built in 14th century, at the top of Chandragutti hill in Shimoga district in Karnataka. The gullible masses from dalit and bahujan communities are made to believe that Renukaamba devi is the incarnation of Renuka or Yallamma of Saundatti. The speciality of this temple is that dalit women must go naked to worship this devi. It is called 'betale seva' or 'nagna puja' i.e. naked worship.

Legend in Purana says that the if girls go naked and pray the devi they

get good husbands and married women get all their wishes fulfilled, the childless women get children, and that those shudra women and girls who do not follow these traditions meet with a lot of calamities.

Some awakened youth trained in Ambedkarite traditions tried to stop this practice in 1984. There was a struggle against these workers, they were beaten up by the goons of pujaris and orthodox mandir committee people, and paraded naked, and were made to worship the Devi in such condition. The victims included some police - even lady police officers - kept for bandobast.

The chief Minister of Karnataka had to appoint a committee to investigate whether "Nagna-puja" has any religious sanction of Hindu sastras. The report was submitted in 1988 stating that there is no such sanction of Hinduism(Brahminism). In 1992 ban was imposed on this "Nagna-puja". There was a hue and cry against it, but since then it is stopped.

Legend of Khandoba

The third deity of Devdasis is Khandoba of Jejuri, though there are eleven 'pithas'. It is the 'kul-daivat' of dalits, though many others worship him including some Muslim devotees, who presumably were dalits, worshiping this deity before being converted to Islam. Even the robbers used to attend the annual fair and finalize their plans there. They were, presumably, of ex-criminal tribes, which was a part of Dalits. Brahmins have homologized this deity and made out stories that Shankara took this form of Martanda, to protect the brahmins from the asuras.

People do votive offering of their sons and daughters to this deity. The terms used are 'waghya' for male and 'murali' for female. It is a form of Devdasi. Murali, whose token marriage is performed with Khandoba, remains unmarried throughout her life and leads a life same as devadasi of Yellama. After Ambedkarite awakening in the Matang society, who form the majority of Murlis, the practice has declined though not completely stopped.

Jogan Shankar gives more details:

'Muralis' are girls dedicated to god Khandoba in their infancy or early

childhood by their parents. "Poor deluded women promise to sacrifice their first born daughters if Khandoba will make them mothers of many children. Then after the vow the first born girl is offered to Khandoba and set apart for him by tying a necklace of seven cowries around the little girl's neck. When she becomes of marriageable age, she is formally married to Khandoba or dagger of Khandoba and become his nominal wife. Henceforth she is forbidden to become the wedded wife of any man, and the result is that she usually leads an infamous life earning a livelihood by sin. Some of these girls become wandering muralis. Others become ordinary public women in any town or city; while a few are said to live for years with one man. The parents of such girls do not feel ashamed to take her earnings, because they belong to Khandoba, and what they do is not sin in the eyes of his devotees. Kunbis, Mahars, Mangs and other low castes make muralis of their daughters in this fashion". (Fuller : 1900 : 103). High caste people of the region also worship Khandoba and their mode of expressing reverence to the god differed. Thus "Not a few high caste people visit Jejuri to pay their vows; but they never give their own girls to Khandoba but buy children from low-caste parents for a small sum of money, which is not a difficult thing to do and offer them instead of their own children". (Fuller, Marcus B., "The wrongs of Indian Womanhood", Edinburgh:Oliphant Anderson and Ferrier, 1900). [Jogan Shankar, p. 50]

Definition of Devadasi under the act

As many laws had to be passed from time to time, for its abolition, it had to be defined by law. One such example is the Bombay Devadasi Act, 1934, which states that "the performance of any ceremony intended to dedicate or having the effect of dedicating of women as a devadasi where such women has or has not consented to performance of such ceremony, is hereby declared unlawful and to be an effect to any custom or rule to the contrary not withstanding". This law also declared the marriage of devadasi valid and children of such marriages as legitimate. [Jogan Shankar, p. 153] However, nobody bothered to enforce the Law, till some Ambedkarites agitated.

Some examples of Brahmanic sexual exploitation

According to Ramanika Gupta, in certain parts in Bihar, even now, a

new dalit bride has to spend the first night with the village head man. [Sugawa, p.69]

A bazaar is organized in Dholpur for sale of Dalit girls. [Sugawa, p. 69]

Kamble describes a custom called Okali. On first or second Saturday comming after the Hindu New Years Day (Gudhi padawa), the devadasis were openly sexually enjoyed in public, about hundred years ago. This is now replaced by another tradition called "Okali", which was in vogue till 1987. It is a festival like 'Rang Panchami'. The young boys from higher castes assemble around a pool of coloured water in front of town temple. Young devadasis in the town stand in front of them in a row, and each receives a sari, a choli and a flower garland. The coloured water is poured over the devadasis who appear virtually naked as the cloths given to them are very thin, scanty, delicate and transparent. The boys play with the bodies of devadasis as they like, doing everything just short of sexual intercourse. All assembled enjoy the scene. This happens in the name of god 'Bili Kallappa'. [Uttam Kamble, Sugawa, p. 81]

Vasant Rajas describes another custom, called "Sidi attu" in town Madakeripura in Karnataka which was in vogue till 1987, when it was banned by the Govt. Here a devadasi is suspended with a hook in her back on one end of a transverse rod placed on a vertical pole planted in ground, and rotated by a rope at the other end. She salutes the gathering, while her garments fly and all the naked lower part of her body is visible to all, for their amusement. This was supposed to bring prosperity to town, and the devadasi used to get a sari, a choli, a coconut and a betel nut, for which she thanked the gathering. [p. 27]

It must be realized that Hinduism(Brahminism) is the only religion in the world, which has given religious sanction and provided with religious philosophy to the practice of prostitution. [Sugawa, p. 81]

It is well known that Dr. Ambedkar advised the conference of Devadasis on 13th June 1936, in Damodar Hall, Parel, Bombay, saying that they must give up this life of sin and be prepared to lead a pure life though it will be a life in poverty, as character is more important than money. After conversion to Buddhism, the custom of devadasis is stopped completely in families converting to Buddhism.

[Prof. Archana Hatekar, Sugawa, p. 92]

Dasis and Devadasis are different

Many scholars including shri Rajas, an active Ambedkarite, who has played an important role in the activities for the Abolition of Devdasi system, has confused a 'devdasi' with 'dasi' which simply meant a female servant. It must not be confused with the 'dasis', which were given in Yadnyas to brahmins as gift. The famous dasis like Manthara of Ramayana fame, Uttara in Mahabharata, Mura in Maurya period or Panna of Rajput period were all 'dasis' and not 'devadasis'.

Use of sex by Brahmins for dominating over masses

Use of sex by brahmins to keep domination over the masses is not a new thing. Shri Rajas gives many examples like 'putra kameshti yadna', the rite of 'laja hom' during Vedic marriages where the 'devas' give up their right over the bride, an old tradition of offering of wife to the guest for the night, the tradition of rajpurohit spending time with the queen in king's absence on war or hunting - the rite called 'anang dana pratana', traditions in Gujrath and Rajasthan of sending young brides before marriage to temple for one night to be spent with the priest, similar tradition of visiting temple priest by one woman from every household for one night during the nine nights in 'navaratra' prevalent in Gujrath and Rajasthan, are all such examples of the tricks employed by the brahmins over the masses. He has also given the example of infamous game of 'ghat kanchuki' during the reign of Peshava Bajirao II. [Vasant Rajas: 1997: 4].

But why blame Peshava Bajirao II, for a game of 'ghat kanchuki'. It is described in the Hindu sastras as 'chakrapuja'. M.M. Dr. P. V. Kane has described it in his 'dharma sastra cha itihas'. He describes that, an equal number of men and women assemble secretly in the night, without any consideration of caste or relationship, and sit around a paper on which 'chakra' is drawn as a symbol of goddess. All the women remove their cholis and put it in a pot, and every man picks up a choli at random and selects his partner for the night. A Hindu Tantrika text, "Kularnava Tantra", he says, mentions that God has ordered that, what ever good or bad transpires that night must never be disclosed. Kane had heard in his childhood that this puja was practiced in some cities in Maharashtra. [Marathi translation by Y. B.

Bhat, p. 430, second edition, 1980, Maharashtra Rajya Sahitya Sanskruti Mandal, Mantralaya, Mumbai]

But all these traditions, customs and practices are not examples of devadasi system.

Indus Valley Civilization

As foreign examples are not applicable to India, the search for time of origin of Devadasi cult in India should start with Harrapan Civilization, which shows no trace of offering of girls in worshiping places. The well known bronze 'dancing girl' is referred by Basham as a representation of temple dancer, but he himself admits that "this can not be proved". As a matter of fact, "historians remained silent about existence of temple or common place of worship" in Harrapan Civilization. [Joga Shankar, p. 38] Though it was a Dravidian civilization, as has been amply proved, it had no connection with the devadasi cult.

Courtesans in Vedic Age

A marathi scholar, "Itihasacharya" V. K. Rajwade, who had taken a vow not to write in English, has described many sexual practices of Aryas, whom he always referred to as "our savage ancestors". They used to have free sex openly in front of fire, so perhaps had no need of prostitution or devadasis.

Rig Veda mentions the word "Samana", which is rendered by different scholars differently to mean a festival, a gathering or a battle, festival being the most favoured. In it among many others, the courtesans used to attend 'to profit by the occasion' [Shastri Shakuntala Rao, "Women in Vedic Age", p. 6]

There are references to secular prostitution in Rig Veda and terms are used like "harlot", "son of a maiden" or "son of an unmarried girl". [Joga Shankar, p. 38]. But certainly these are not the examples of temple prostitution.

Buddhist period

That way, prostitution is supposed to be the oldest profession. The known history of India starts in sixth century B.C. and we find in

Buddha's time, an illegitimate child, becomming a renowned courtesan Amrapali, who later became a Bhikkuni.

Kautilya

"Artha Shastra" of Kautilya, or Chanakya or Vishnugupta is supposed to be a work of around 300 B.C., though some people think that there are interpolations of the Gupta age. It mentions "Ganikadyaksha" - superintendent of prostitutes, the penalties for prostitutes, dancers and singers, but does not talk of devadasis.

Ashokan Times

An inscription of Ashokan times found in a cave at Ramagarh in Vindhya hills, as referred by J. Bloch, mentions a word "Sutanuka", which in later period was used to denote temple dancer. But this is no "clear reference to devadasis in early sources" [Joga Shankar, p. 39]

The Jatakas also make no mention of temple dancers. (Altekar, p. 185)

Vatsayana's Kamasutra

It is expected that Vatsayana, who deals with sexual attitude in ancient India, will make a note of this cult, if it existed at his times. But he does not, as Joga Shankar observes:

"In early literature we find abundant references to secular prostitutes, dancers and courtesans, But specific references to temple dancers and sacred prostitution are not traced. Classics like Vatsayana's 'Kamasutra' (250 A.D.) deal in detail about courtesans. There is, however, no direct reference to sacred prostitution. ... He even classifies prostitutes into nine classes, the most honoured of whom is ganika. "Such a women" says Vatsayana, "will always be rewarded by kings and praised by gifted persons, and her connection will be sought by many people" (Burton : 1923 :166) [Jogan Shankar, "Devadasi Cult", p. 40]

Later Works

We find in a sanskrit drama of seventh century A.D., Mrichakatikam, a

courtesan Vasantsena having courtship with of a poor Brahmin Charudatta.

In South India, about the same time or a little later, two Tamil epics "Manimekhalai", a Buddhist composition and "Sillapadhikaran", another non-brahmin creation, which depict the story of Madhavi, a girl adept in singing and dancing etc.

All these belonged to flesh trade. But none of them was a devadasi. This distinction is important, because the origins of these two systems are different.

Earlier accounts of devadasi system

Vasant Rajas, "Devdasi: Shodha ani bodha", (marathi), Sugava Prakashan, Pune, 1997, mentions of an inscription of 1004 A.D., in Tanjor Temple mentioning the numbers of devdasis to be 400 in Tanjor, 450 in Brahideswara temple and 500 in Sorti Somnath temple. [Vasant Rajas, p.3]

R. C Majumdar, who blames the inclusion all people with different views into its religious fold by the Buddhists for the general decline of morality in India, admits the degradation in ideas of decency and sexual morality in the Hindu religious practices. He observes:

"A great Sanskrit poet of the period gave a vivid description of the deva-dasis in a temple of Krishna and added that they made one feel as if the goddess Lakshmi had come down on earth to attend her lord the god Murari. (Dhoyi, "Pavandutam", v. 28) Contemporary epigraphic records also refer in rapturous terms to the personal charm and beauty of the hundreds of deva-dasis assigned to a single temple. [R. C. Majumdar, "The Struggle for Empire", HCIP, vol. V, fourth edition 1989, p.400]

Ghoshal enumerates the number of devadasis in various brahmanic temples:

"Indeed literary record and inscription give us the impression that they were regarded as a part of the normal establishment of temples, The number of these girls in the temples often reached high proportions. The temple of Somnatha at the time its destruction by Sultan Mahmud

is stated to have been served by three hundred and fifty dancing girls. According to Chau Ju-Kua, Gujarat contained 4000 temples in which lived over 20,000 dancing girls whose function was to sing twice daily while offering food to the deities and while presenting flowers.

"We have the valuable testimony of Al-Biruni to the effect that the kings maintained this institution for the benefit of their revenues in the teeth of the opposition of the Brahmana priests. But for the kings, he says, no Brahmana or priest would allow in their temples women who sing, dance and play. The kings, however, make them a source of attraction to their subjects so that they may meet the expenditure of their armies out of the revenues derived therefrom. [U. N. Ghoshal, "The Struggle for Empire", HCIP vol. V, fourth edition 1989, p.495]

Al-Biruni's statements, as is well known, are all based on the learned Brahmins, whom he interviewed. So it is the Brahmins' side of the story. The truth is that Brahmins and kings used to fight for the possession of these girls.

Distribution of Devadasis between Brahmins and Ksatriyas

The devadasis in temples had become the targets of the pleasure seekers among the brahmins and the kings. Brahmin priests claimed that they being the representatives of gods in heaven, the 'bhudevas', i.e. gods on the earth, they have the first claim, as anything offered to god belongs to brahmins, so also the girls offered to god must belong to them. The Kings retorted, that they make appointments of devadasis, they give them money and land and feed them, so they have greater claim. Ultimately the conflict was resolved by an understanding and devadasis were branded on their chest with emblems of 'garuda' (eagle) and 'chakra' (discus) for kings and 'shankha' (conch) for brahmins. [Rajas: p. 2]

It is interesting to note that all these emblems are Vaishnavite. We know that Ramanujam had started the system of branding on shoulders, with shankha and chakra, for the devotees embracing Vaishnava faith and it was a part of initiation rite. [See details in my book: 'Tirupati Balaji was a Buddhist Shrine']. The system of branding devadasis seems to be the further application of the same principle.

Devdasi system among Muslims

The influence over Muslims of hindu of devdasi tradition is mentioned by Vasant Rajas. Some muslim sects had started offering girls to 'dargas'. Such girls were called 'acchutis'. There is a colony of such people in Lucknow in U.P. even today. The girl is married to Koran, Nikah is performed, the girl is called 'bibi' and is condemned to lead a life of prostitution. [Vasant Rajas, p. 17]

Earliest References in Epigraphs

In inscription of about 1230-1240 A.D. in the time of raja Raya III, in Tamilnadu the word Emperumandiyar is used for dancing girls, in Vishnu temples. This word had the sense of Vaishnavas before 966 A.D. [K. Jamanadas, "Tirupati Balaji was a Buddhist Shrine", p. 125]

In India, first references start appearing around tenth century or so in Jagannatha temple of Puri, which was originally a Buddhist temple, where Buddha's Tooth Relic was being worshipped. Here these dancing girls were called 'Maharis'. It is well known that 'Mahar' is a prominent untouchable caste of Maharashtra.

The earliest reference to the girls dedicated to temples appears in a Tamil inscription dating back to the reign of Rajaraja the great, a Chola monarch. He was a Shaiva votary. He came to throne in 985 A.D. The inscription indicates that in 1004 A.D. the main temple at Tanjore had four hundred 'tali-cheri-pendugal' or 'women of the temple' attached to it. "They settled in the streets surrounding the temple and in return of their service received one or more shares, each of which consisted of the produce of one veli (26,755 sq. meters) of land, calculated at 100 Kalam of paddy". (E. Hultzsch: South Indian Inscriptions : Vol II: part III). The entire Chola country was filled with temples with devadasis in attendance as is clear from this particular inscription. It also provides an exhaustive list of the dancing girls who had been deputed to the Tanjore temple. [Jogan Shankar, p. 52]

"Historians have also traced and inscription from the Chebrolu of Krishna District in Andhra Pradesh dating back to 1139 A.D. The inscription records that some dancing girls were in services at the temple of Nageshvara right from the age of eight years old (Epigraphia

Carnatica : V : Ak : 105 : 1139 A.D.).

Earlier Duties of devadasis

In earlier stages, their duties remained religious as Mahalingam presumes that when food was offered to God they danced before the idol, they themselves gave him food and all that was necessary. (Mahalingam; 1940:150). Probably this services to only God remained for a long period.

Harshad. R. Trivedi believes initial spurt of the cult was associated with the great spurt in building up of temples, and that the cult of "Devadasi" began to flourish during Pallava and Chola dynasties in South India from the 6th to 13th Century A.D., and the rise of "sacred prostitutes" in India seems to have taken place in the ninth or tenth century A.D. [(Trivedi :1976:76), Jogam Shankar, p. 111]

However, at later stage devadasis were forced to please earthly Gods and lords as well. Mahalingam referring to Nuniz, wrote : .lm6

"Every Saturday, they were obliged to go to king's palace to dance and prostrate before the King's idol which was in the interior of his palace" (Mahalingam:1940:158).

In Mattsya Purana there is a reference to the dishonoured women of the defeated or killed wives of 'asuras' who were asked to serve in the temples and practise prostitution (Nadkarni:1975:15). Naturally it seems that the other kings and princes treated the devadasis as their personal servants and forced them to dedicate every thing they possessed to them. Emulating the practice of sponsoring the cult of such rulers, chieftains, feudals, officials, and moneyed persons also took advantage of this system and treated devadasis as objects of their carnal desires. Priests and religious heads of various denominations and temples supported the cult to continue and persist by bestowing religious sanctions. [Jagan Shankar, p.111]

Jagan Shankar observes:

"Hence, we have to assume that they were rare until the middle ages, Altekar also opines that, "The custom of the association of dancing girls with temples is unknown to Jataka literature. It is not mentioned

by Greek writers; the Arthashastra which describes in detail the life of ganikas is silent about it" (Altekar : 1973:185). [Jogan Shankar, "Devdasi Cult", p. 39]

"Probably the custom of dedicating girls to temples and sacred prostitution became quite common in the 6th century A.D. as most of the Puranas containing references to it have been composed during this period. Several Puranas recommend that arrangements should be made to enlist the services of singing girls at the time of worship at temples. They even recommend the purchase of beautiful girls and dedicating them to temples." [Jogan Shankar, p. 40 ff.]

"Bhavishya Purana suggests that the best way of winning Suryaloka is by dedicating a bevy of prostitutes to a `Sun' (Solar) Temple" (Altekar : 1973:184). [Jogan Shankar, p.40]

Moghul period

Abul-Fazl records the condition of prostitutes, both sacred and secular, during Akbar's reign (1556-1605) in his famous work Ain- e-Akbari, stating their number was so much that a 'Daroga' or a superintendent was required to supervise their activities, and their locality was called 'saitanpura' or 'devil's villa'. [Blochman and Jarrett, 1873, quoted by Jogan Shankar, p. 40]

"During the reigns of Emperor Jahangir (1605-1627) and Shah Jahan 1628-1658), the luxury, ostentation, extravagance and depravity increased". (Manucci : 1907 : 9). [Jogan Shankar, p. 40]

It was Aurangzeb (1659-1707), who seems to have taken pity on the plight on these women and made many efforts to attempt to alleviate their sufferings, and at the same time, check the wastage which was slowly draining the resources of the country. He was a committed Mohammedan puritan who led a life of an ascetic. During his reign thousands of Hindu temples were demolished by his order, and every effort was made to wipe out prostitution and everything pertaining to it. He even issued public proclamations, prohibiting singing and dancing; at the same time ordered all the dancing girls to marry or be banished from the Kingdom. (Elliot : 1867 ;283). [Jogam Shankar, p.41]

Why the Devadasi cults are less in North India

W. Crooke while presenting account of the tribes and castes of Northern India, mentions castes such as tawaif, gandharb and patur. These castes consist of dancers, singers and prostitutes. Only one caste called 'raj-kanya' among them seems to be temple dancer. [Jogan Shankar, p.42] There are certain gypsy tribes named `bediyas' and `nats', who are dancers, acrobats and prostitutes in Bengal. But these castes have no connection with temple worship. [Jogan Shankar, p. 43]

Thus we find that though the secular prostitution flourishes in Northern India as in the rest of the country, the Devadasi cult seems to be less in existence. This is attributed to Muslim influence, as Jagan Shankar observes:

"Hence in North India the institution dedication to temple dancing is very rare. This may be due to Mohammedan rule which destabilized temple administration and sacred complexes were frequently attacked by alien plunderers. However, dedicated dancers were not attached to any temple as such. Mohammedan puritans like Aurangzeb treated this institution and other Hindu cults with contempt. He wanted to do away with such cults. In fact he succeeded in his endeavours to some extent." [p.43]

Participation of Veera Shaivas

At least during British times, Veera Shaivas did not lag behind the Brahmins and the kings in exploitation of these girls. In a paper entitled `Basavis in Peninsular India' at the Anthropological Society of Bombay during 1910, presented by R.C. Artal, then deputy Collector of Belgaum describes:

"... Indeed the ceremony is subject to local variation. The lucky badge is generally tied on her neck by the Lingayet Jagam or Arya-Pattadappannavaru or Charamurtigalu of Hire- Math, i.e. Chief math of the Village. The practice observed with regard to the consummation of the Basavi is that generally the Hiremathadayya has the right to take her maidenhood" (Artal :1910:99)

"It seems to me that the institution of Basavis was mainly started with

a view to satisfy the carnal desires of Jangamas or Lingayat priests who are not allowed to touch a non-Lingayat women. Hence the proverb "Bhaktar Mani Oota, Basavi Mane Nidre" which means "a Jangama take his meals in the houses of Bhaktas (devotees) and sleeps at night in the house of a Basavi" (Artal :op.cit.).

"The leading members of the Veershaiva community of the village, including the Jangamas of the Hirematha, endow her with a concave metal vessel on the occasion of her dedication, and thus permit her to go a-begging. I have seen the concave copper vessel given to the Veerashaiva Basavi of Rabkavi in the Sangli State on the Terdal-Jamkhandi Road. It bears an inscription on it to the effect that it was given to the Basavi by the Pattadappanavaru of the place" (Artal : op.cit).

Commenting on this Joga Shankar observes that, it is evident from this description that dominating castes and their priests sponsored this cult in the past. [Joga Shankar, p. 62]

Some important Devadasis

In spite of great humiliation and exploitation, and ultimate horrible fate of most of them, devadasis being expert in dancing and singing, some of them have attained high fame. Rajas mentions some of such important ones. The famous dancer Jailaxmi of Padanallur became the queen of King Ramanad. Devadasi Subalaksmi became a famous classical singer. The famous devadasi house of 'Mangeshkar' from Goa is renowned for singing all over the world. During late Peshava rule, example of Patthe Baburao, a great 'shahir', who forgot his brahmanic origin and removed his sacred thread for his consort Pawala, a Mahar by caste, is still famous [Rajas: p. 54], and people have produced films on the couple.

Attitude of present day elites towards their past

The elites do not wish to be reminded of their demerits of the past. Instead of trying to take lessons from the past misdeeds, they try to glorify the past and when somebody points out their defects they acuse such people with adjectives like "gutter inspector", forgetting that **it is your own gutter.** One such example could be quoted:

Article *Rythem and Reason* in Indian Express, 2.1.2000, based on "Indian Dance: the Ultimate Metaphor", ed. by Shanta Serbjeet Singh, describes the attitude of the westerners about *devadasis*. Here she mentions,

"Equally strongly, dance all over India reeled under impact of Raj and the shame and diminished sense of self it injected into all layers of Indian culture. To cite only one example, the art and the context in which *devdasis*, the vestal virgins of Bharatnatyam worked, is thus described by the Frenchman Abbe Dubois in the late 18th century.: "Such are the loose females who are consecrated in a special manner to the worship of gods in India. The service they perform consists of dancing and singing. Their chanting is generally confined to the obscene songs which relate to some circumstance or other of the licentious lives of their Gods. As soon as their public business is over, they open their cells of infamy and frequently convert the temple in a stew. Such is the outline of the religious ceremonies of the Hindus. A religion more shameful or indecent has never existed amongst a civilised people." "

"From Max Mueller who pontificated about India to Katherine Mayo whose gutter inspector's report on India provked even the unprovocable Mahatma, uninformed and often virulent coment on aspects of Indian culture abound in the annals of Western writings on India during the Raj. And it is in this context of a bruised culture, rejected by the alien rulers and betrayed by its own power elite, that we have to see the story of Indian dance in the period leading upto Independence. ..."

Classical Dance forms of ancient India

On Zee T. V. News on 13th March 2000, a small clipping was shown about interview of famous Katthak dancer of India, Shovana Narayan, where she spot lighted the history of Katthak in North India. Though Rajasthan, Luckhnow and Benaras are the traditional "gharanas" of Katthak dance, in historical times in Bihar flourised this dance form during the Mauryan and Gupta times. This, she said, is evident from the perusal of dresses and costumes and poses, posture, and the mudras etc. in the images of those times.

Today, we find the exhibitions over media, and festivals being

organized, specially for foreigners, to show how great was our ancient art form of dance, may it be Bharat Natyam, Kuchipudi or Oddisi. It is never mentioned on such occasions that this art was the gift of these low caste women who nurtured the art under trying conditions and with great suffering. The art was later learnt by women of higher castes and now it is they who only participate in international festivals and the like. Jogan Shankar gives an account how this happened about 'Sadir' dance of devadasis. He observes:

"The revivalists wanted to preserve the traditional from of Sadir dance by purifying it. The new name was given as 'Bharatanatyam'. As a consequence of purification some modifications were introduced into the content of to dance style. The revivalists were basically belonging to Brahmin dominated Theosophical Circles. Many Brahmin girls started to learn the dance from devadasis. Hence the dance technique remained unchanged. The only change was change in the class of clientele." [p. 144]

The themes were picked up from Sanskrit texts, higher caste girls learned the dances and put them in new settings which excluded devadasi traditions, and the dance form became individual oriented from the community oriented. [p.144] Theosophical Society of India revived the devadasi dance, declaring as the aim of restoration of India's ancient glory. Rukmini Arundale was well groomed and encouraged by Annie Besant to convert the devadasi's 'Sadir' to 'Bharatanatyam', and started training the higher caste women, with the funds of the Theosophical Society, organizing a convention in 1935-36, and establishing an International Academy of Arts which was later renamed as Kalakshetra. [Jogan Shankar, p. 145]

Oddisi Dance Form

The Brahmeswar epigraph of ninth century A.D., denotes that in the reign of Kesari kings, the 'maharis' or 'maaharis' were dancing and singing in temple of Orrisa under royal patronage. King Chodagangadeva of Ganga dynasty had appointed maaharis for religious duties in Jaganatha temple at Puri, where the dance in front of deity was a part of religious ritual right from twelfth century till middle of 20th century. Anang Bhimdeva son of Chodgangadeva built a 'nat mandapa' in the temple, where these maahari girls used to

dance and sing 'ashtapadi' from the Jaideva's "Gita-Govinda". King Kapilandradeva had ordered to have dance twice daily in front of deity, and his grand son Prataprudradeva ordered that only songs from "Gita-Govind" must be used. [Kosare H. L., "prachin bharatatil naaga", marathi, 1989, dyana pradip prakashana, Nagpur, p. 118 ff.] He further quotes, from an article by Sunil Kothari:

"Thus Orrisi dance found a permanent place in the form of ritual service performed by these Maaharis. The various kings who ruled over Orissa saw to it that the rituals and the religious ceremonies were maintained regularly and contributed in sustaining the institution of Maaharis, who as a matter of fact, have been the torch bearers of this exquisite dance form." [article "Orissi Dance", Bhavan's Journal, 1.11.1970]

Theories of origin of Devadasi Cult

Jogan Shankar observes that, none of the numerous theories, provides explanations satisfactorily. However inadequate they may be, they help us in our inquiry, so he gives the list of such theories.:

1. The custom of dedicating girls to temples emerged as a substitute for human sacrifice, being and offering to the gods and goddesses to appease and secure blessings for the community as a whole.

2. It is a rite to ensure the fertility of the land and the increase of human being and animal population on the principle of Homeopathic magic.

3. It is part of phallic worship which existed in India from early Dravidian times.

4. Probably sacred prostitution sprang from the custom of providing sexual hospitality for strangers; and if such hospitality is offered by the living mortal wives of a deity, prosperity would bound to result.

5. The devadasi cult simply represents the licentious worship offered by a people, subservient to a degraded and vested interests of priestly Class.

6. Devadasi system is a deliberately created custom in order to exploit

lower caste people in India by upper castes and classes as:

(a) The upper castes have influenced the establishment of an order of prostitutes who are licensed to carry on their profession under the protective shield of religion.

(b) The establishment of such system facilitates them the access to low caste women to fulfill their carnal desire.

(c) The setting up of such a system can destroy the lower castes' sense of self-respect in a society."

As Jogan Shankar feels that the last theory is most likely to be the real cause, we will concentrate only over it. He feels:

"The above mentioned theories have been put forth by many scholars in the past. The survey of literature and historical evidences clearly show that most of them are inadequate to explain the whole institution of devadasis. While some of them are supported by Frazer, Briffault, Tawney and Penzer these theories or explanations do not support everything. Such theories were presented after making comparisons. ... Hence for the present study the sixth explanation seems to be more feasible. ..." [Jogan Shankar, "Devadasi Cult", p. 62 ff.]

The first five theories can not explain, why only bahujan girls have been becoming devadasis and not the others. So his theory of exploitation of lower castes by the upper castes is very sound. But it is the effect of devadasi cult, and not the cause, as we will see later.

Decline of Women started with the decline of Buddhism

It is well known that at one time girls were allowed to undergo 'Upnayana', which was a 'right' to take education, but their position declined later. It started from Manu and went on deteriorating further. Altekar identifies the period of 500 A.D. to 1800 A. D. as one of further deterioration During this period the 'Upanayana' rite for girls was banned, marriage remaining the only alternative. The age of marriages of girls was lowered and child marriages became the rule. Widow remarriages were prohibited. 'Purdah' was observed leading women to a secluded life. Hindu sastras considered women as Shudras, and they were debarred from reading or reciting the Vedas and perform

any Vedic sacrificial rituals. Women were indoctrinated through the puranic stories which inculcated blind-faith rather than rational thinking. It was impressed on their minds that they must visit temples, perform vows and observe fasts with more regularity than menfolk to accumulate 'punya', i.e. virtue. In this context Altekar explains the paradox with these apt remarks:

"Thus the very women whom religion had once considered as outcastes, were also the most faithful custodians of its spirit and traditions (1973: 176)" [Jagan Shankar, p. 9]

Condition of women in non-hindu religions

We all know that, the women's participation in Buddhism and Jainism was more their condition was not that humiliating as in Hinduism(Brahminism). After Buddha changed his stand about the admission of women into the Sangha, we have many examples of outstanding Buddhist nuns. Later, Jains also permitted nuns but more puritanic Digambara Jains held that women could never gain salvation unless they are reborn as male. [Jogan Shankar, p. 10]

In a study, from Madras, it was found that Christian women had a much higher rate of participation in white collar occupations than Hindu women and that Muslim women had a much lower rate. The report states that Christianity places fewer restrictions on the activities of women that other religions and therefore Christian women have acquired more education and vocational training than women of other communities.

Chandrakala A. Hate, who has also found similar differences from Bombay and Poona, claimed that "since there is no joint family system among the Christians, women work out of necessity the expectation of the eventual need to be self-supporting". (Hate :1969 :16). Both studies attribute the low rate of participation of Muslim women to greater conservatism." [Jgan Shankar, p. 11]

A stigma on Hinduism(Brahminism)

The faith in god itself is a blind faith. The blind faith increases the exploitation of 'masses' by the 'classes'. Any time the interests of these classes are in danger, there is a hue and cry that the 'dharma' is in

danger. I have a great respect for the members of 'Andha shraddha nirmulan samiti' for their work, but it is a pity, that they have also failed in removing the fear from the minds of people about these so called devis, and could not convince them that matting of hair - 'jat' - as locals call it, is not a 'call from devi' to offer their daughter as a devadasi. I think it is because they do not like to include the faith on god as a 'blind faith', though they accept in private that the origin of all blind faith starts with the faith in existence of supreme god.

Untouchabilty has been recognized as an 'evil' of Hinduism(Brahminism), and a stigma, but devadasi system is still not recognized as such. The day that is recognized as such, will be the real day of beginning of liberation of women. Dr. Ambedkar has shown that the real cause of Untouchability is contempt of Buddhists. Similarly, it is the fall of Buddhism that caused the degradation of Buddhists nuns to the present state of devadasis.

Salient points

The theories to which Joga Shankar attributes the origin, it would be clear that he is confusing the effect with the cause. That the exploitation of dalits is the effect and not the cause of devdasi system. The cause is the contempt of Buddhism. His theory does not explain many points.

We know that devadasi system started around ninth or tenth century after the fall of Buddhism, during the so called 'Rajput period'.

We know that many Buddhist temples were converted to Brahmanic ones during the period.

We know that it was the Buddhist system of at least one girl or a boy from each house to join the Sangha.

We know that the Bhikkus were killed. Some ran away to foreign lands, some accepted brahmanism and became low grade brahmins. Then what happened of these bhikunis?

We know that during the last phase of Buddhism, it was Vajra Yana, which prevailed. In later stages of this religious system, the importance of women in the religious practices had increased. As a matter of fact

all tantras, hindu as well as buddhist, used women as media, in their religious practices.

We know the system of untouchability had started during late Gupta period around fifth or sixth century. How did the untouchable girls got entry into the sanctum sanctorium after this. These girls must be present in the temple service before the system of untouchability started and some of the Buddhists, residing out side the villages and refused to stop eating beef of a dead cow, were condemned to be untouchables, as explained by Dr. Ambedkar.

Devadasis were degraded Buddhist nuns

It is, therefore, our opinion, that today's devadasis are the degraded Buddhist nuns of ancient India, as put forward by us some ten years ago. [Dr. K. Jamanadas, "Tirupati Balaji was a Buddhist Shrine", p. 125 ff.] The points in favour of this theory are as follows:

In Tamilnadu the word Emperumandiyar which was used in the sense of Vaishnavas before 966 A.D got the meaning of dancing girls, attached to Vishnu temples, in inscription of about 1230-1240 A.D. in the time of raja Raya III. [K. Jamanadas, p. 125]

In Maharashtra, they are called 'Devadasis', meaning 'female servant of God'. In the opinion of present author these devadasis were originally Buddhist nuns, and the system of making first born daughter, a Bhikshuni was prevalent, and the fall of Buddhism caused the degradation of these bhikshunis to the level of todays devadasis.

Foreign origin of the custom?

It is a mistake to trace the origin of Indian Temple dancers to Babylonian, Greek, Syrian, Phonecian or Egyptian tradition or any foreign ancient customs. Even some very important leaders who are struggling for the abolition of 'Devadasi system' in parts of Maharashtra and Karnataka, seem to attribute this origin. Practices of dancing in these foreign temples was thousands of years before the Christian era. Indian scene is comparatively more recent, about 1000 A.D. or so. It should be clearly understood that Ambrapali, Vasantsena and Madhavi were not Devadasis, as mentioned above, and there is no foreign influence on Indian Temple dancers. This system of

devadasis started after the decline of Buddhism in India during the so called "Rajput Period", and flourished during the "Muslim Period". Both these periods were actually periods of "Brahmin Raj"

Their nomenclature

They were called emperimandiars in Tamilnadu, a name which was applied to devotees of Vishnu before being called Vaishnavas, as already seen. In certain parts of Maharashtra, these devadasis are known as 'bhavin' or 'jogin' or 'jogtin'. All these words literally mean a Buddhist nun.

Temple of Jagganatha at Puri

In India, first references start appearing around tenth century or so in temple of Puri. It is well known that this was a Buddhist temple, where Buddha's Tooth Relic was being worshipped. For details on this point please see my book 'Tirupati Balaji was a Buddhist Shrine'. It is interesting to know that these dancing girls were called 'Maharis' in temple of Puri. It is well known that 'Mahar' is a prominent untouchable caste of Maharashtra. From Jogan Shankar we learn that same name is used in Kerala too. That the Kerala Nayar community were Nagas and formerly Buddhists is well recognized.

Ancient Indian literature is silent about them

One has to differentiate between Ganikas and their inferior counterparts Varaganas on one hand and Devadasis on the other. That the Devadasis were Buddhist nuns can be deducted from many evidences. They were unknown to ancient India. Jatakas, Kautillya or Vatsayana do not mention them, but later Puranas are full of them. The system started only after the fall of Buddhism and records of them start appearing around 1000 A.D.

Old Buddhist practice of offering a child for religious cause

In certain castes the system of offering at least one daughter from family for the service of god was rampant in almost all families of the caste. It well known that 95% of the devadasis today belong caste of Untouchables, who were, of course, Buddhist originally.

These dancing girls and their male counterparts had different names in different parts of the country, and the important point to note is that the pair was, and even today is considered not as husband and wife but as brother and sister, the relation that existed among the Buddhist nuns and Bhikshus. The practice of Ceremonial Begging also denotes Buddhist origins.

Their deities

There is always some religious rite conducted at the time of their initiation and that they were looked upon with respect by the society in early days, It is also noteworthy they have the Deities of their own, which are distinct from Brahmnic Deities, and the original connection with Buddhist Deities is already forgotten.

Some of the Deities of these Devedasis are also now homologized as some Brahmins also worship these Deities, and the people whose 'Kuladdaivatam' are those deities, are of lower castes and do not belong to Brahmnic order. These deities, are of lower castes and do not belong to Brahmnic order.

Religious Orthodoxy

Origin of devadasi system is religious and not economic. It has not only economic facets but also religious ones. For example devadasis have a firm religious belief that they must not get married, as they are married to god. This poses a difficult problem, not only to find them husbands but also to persuade them for marriage. Instances are abundant that these girls refused to get married and some of those who did get married, lost their prestige in the eyes of their kith and kin. This kind of orthodoxy can only be explained on religious grounds and not on economical ones.

Unfortunately the present Devadasis are ignorant of their glorious past and that the prominent among them and their families have dissociated themselves from the problems of Devadasis. They are against any kind of reform and are associating with the very social institutions and people, who made them prostitutes from servants of God.

What more evidence is needed?

It is a matter of understanding. 95 per cent of Devadasis are untouchables. Being untouchables they were Buddhists of olden days as shown by Dr. Ambedkar very aptly. Before the name 'Vaishnva' came in vogue, the devotees of the Lord of Tirumalai were known by the name 'emperumandiyars'. The same name was being applied to these women who became devadasis from buddhist bhikkunis. This is a direct evidence that the ancestors of todays devadasis who were devotees of Venkateswara, were Buddhists and that the Lord of Tirumalai was the Lord of these Buddhists.

The name by which these erstwhile Buddhists are known today, was the name of the devotees of the Lord Venkateswara. What more direct evidence could there be that the Lord Venkateswara was the Buddhist deity.

Evolution of the System

The evolution of the devadasi cult has been traced erroneously to a period earlier than Aryans entry in India because of 'dancing figure' in Harrapan civilization. This is shown above to be false.

The Kerala pattern of matriacheal system, as Joga Shankar seems to suggest, also has nothing to do with this cult and it is not a relic of Dravidian matriarchal society, in which the genealogy of a child was traced only to the mother.

Contrary to what he suggests, the children of devadasis are forced to enter `Basavi' or mother's name in the slot meant for father's name in the school application forms, only because they do not have a social father and even if known, the biological father accepts no responsibility. This has nothing to do with the matriarchal society of Dravidian region and no parallel can be drawn. One might remember a story of Satyakama Jabala from Upanishada, who was placed in similar situation.

Joga Shankar's suggestion that, Aryan invasion saw many Dravidian deities being homologized by Brahmins is correct. We have already seen many such examples given by Bal Krishna Nair. He has given examples of how the Tamil Muruga came to be installed as the

Subramania and how the Tamilian Avai was metamorphosed into the Durgai and Parvathi in the Aryan pantheon, and even Mayon and Mal, the old pre Aryan Tamil names subsequently got identified with Vishnu. An ancient 'Muruga' temple popularly known as "Ayyappa Swami" (also considered as Buddhist in origin) became Sanskritised as 'Shastha' and the son of Mohini-Vishnu by Siva. He has described how the deities are similarly married and the new relative assumes equal importance in a new place, the bride, of course, in this case is usually the Dravidian deity and the bridegroom is mostly Shiva e.g. marriage of goddess Meenakshi of Madurai with Shiva. [Nair :1959: 51] For details how Ayyappa was a Buddhist deity, see K. Jamanadas: 1991: 28.

Similarly, Basavi or Jogati such as Yellamma, originally a Dravidian Goddess, became Renuka or Renukamba and was superimposed by an Aryan system of devadasi, which was prevalent in Somannath and Jagannath Temple at Puri and other north Indian temples where the impact of the Aryans was predominant.

Initially the dedicated women were required to clean the sanctum - sanctorium, for maintenance of lamps in cleaning, putting oil, lighting the lamp, offering food (naivedya) to the main deity, assisting priests at the time of worship, as they used to do as Buddhist nuns. Education and learning of women had already stopped with the decline of Buddhism, so these nuns had no other work. System of washing and bathing the Buddhist images had already started in Mahayani system.

Ratha Yatra was a Buddhist practice copied by Brahmanas [K. Jamanadas: 1991: 160] These girls started to dance and sing in praise of the deity, and look after cleanliness of the temple complex. These women were said to be expert artists in music and dance. We have seen how Bharatnayam, a classical dance form, flourishes today because of devadasis of Tamil Nadu. As society underwent changes so also patrons of devadasi changed and their service also shifted.

From Devadasi to a Prostitute

The later progress can be surmised as mentioned by Joga Shankar:

"At a later stage, devadasis were asked to serve the king as in the case of God, since the king was considered to be God on earth. In fact

Kings sponsored this cult. Temple dancers along with their traditional ritual functions started rendering their services to royal palaces and assisting Kings in the art of politic. They were use in espionage activities against enemy Kings and Court dancer.

"Kings started building temples and appointed devadasis to serve God in the temples and royal palaces. This development had a far reaching impact on popularization of the cult. Other lesser Kings, chieftains and feudals also emulated their superiors and started patronizing the cult. In rural areas feudals who possessed substantial land, exercised commandable authority over other socially and economically weaker sections of society. They were de facto owners of men and material of the region. The cult served as an instrument through which they could gain the assessability to desirable low caste and poor women. The field experience supports that this cult is prevalent only among scheduled caste women who are subjugated and suppressed by upper caste members since time immemorial." [Jogan Shankar:1990:157]

And thus the Buddhist nuns were converted to today's Devadasis, the cheap prostitutes in the name of god, and it was the most dreadful result of the decline and fall of Buddhism in ancient India, affecting mostly the dalitbahujans.

Chapter 12

DECLINE IN SCIENCE IN ANCIENT INDIA WAS DUE TO DECLINE OF BUDDHISM Ahimsa of Buddha blamed

A learned medical specialist from Nagpur, in an article in lay press, while describing ancient medical sciences in India, has remarked that fall of science of surgery was because of 'ahimsa' taught by the Buddha. Though the remark was as an orbus dictum, it shows not only his ignorance of Indian history and of Buddhism, but also desire for making false charges on Buddhism due to, may be, his contempt for the Buddhists. The surgery was never considered 'himsa' by the Buddhists, nor for that matter by anybody else. Certainly fall of sciences was not because of 'ahimsa' of the Buddha.

Modern science is undoubtedly a contribution of the west. That way, in all societies, there were attempts of obstruction to progress of science. In India they got more success. There was a time in Indian history when Indian science was not only famous in the country, but it was so all over the world. If the progress of Indian science would have been maintained unhindered after the sixth century A.D. after the fall of Harsha, we Indians, today, would have been foremost in the scientific field.

Golden era of Science in India

From the ruins of Harappa and Mohenjodaro, it is clear that there existed a pre Aryan urban civilization of Dravidians, which went by the name of Nagas. It shows great development of town planning, water supply and urban facilities, sanitary drainage and granaries.

Gold used for ornaments in Harrapan culture was from Kolar gold mines, the only source available, which is proved by a committee of metallurgical experts under sir Edwin Pascoe, who performed chemical analysis, under the direction of Sir John Marshall. So gold mining was a flourishing industry of the time. This also shows the communicating links between south and north, Vindhyas and forests of Dandakaranya were no bar.

The copper used in Harrapan civilization was imported from Rajputana, and tin from Hazaribagh. It used various types of stones quarried all over India, and some imported from outside.

The modern number system of 0 to 9 with use of decimal point is the contribution of Indian mathematicians. It spread to Europe via Arab countries.

Mauryan India also achieved remarkable success in fields of Engineering, town planning, architecture and art. India's first irrigation dam belongs to this era and was aptly called "Sudarshana", i.e. beautiful in later inscriptions of Rudradamana.

We know the importance of Ashokan pillars for aesthetic beauty, craftsmanship and religious declarations, but it was also known for the science of polishing of stones to such an extent that it became the distinguishing mark, the structures with high polish being ascribed to Ashokan period. Such gloss and polish, Marshall says, "no modern mason can produce", Vincent Smith calls it "the despair of modern masons", Tom Coryat and Whittekar described it as of brass, Chaplain Terry as a pillar of marble, and Bishop Heber as pillar of cast metal.

In the first and third centuries A.D., two important texts were composed on medical science, namely Charak Samhita and Sushrut samhita, which show the advanced stage medical knowledge in India.

Susrut Samhita, which is a text of surgical science, describes more than one hundred instruments of surgery. It also describes the plastic surgery procedures, specially the operation of rebuilding of nose, what we today call as rhinoplasty.

At the time of invasion of Alexander, India was famous for medicine and surgery.

In Buddhist books, we find mention of Jivaka who operated on the brain of a merchant. He was appointed by Emperor Bimbisara as a physician for Lord Buddha and cured Him of constipation by making use of inhaling fragrance of medication on a lotus flower. The science of Inhalers in modern medicine is pretty recent. He cured diseases of head, a fistula by ointment, jaundice and performed surgery on brain and intestinal "entanglements" as per the Vinaya texts, which Radha Kumud Mukharji calls were "not given to exaggeration like a work of fiction".

Ashoka had sent medical missions to five Hellenistic States of Europe for humanitarian service, with *aushadha*, *mula* and *phala*, as per Rock Edict 2 and 13.

Education of medicine was compulsory in Nalanda Mahavihara and even I-Tsing had to undergo a course.

Up to seventh or eighth century A.D., Indian physicians and surgeons were respectfully appointed in Baghdad.

Indian medical books were popular in China. A Chinese work composed in 455 A.D., is derived from Indian text. A number of medical books are found in Chinese Buddhist collection. A text on Children's Diseases, named "Ravana-kumara-charita" was translated into Chinese as late as 11th century. [Classical Age, p. 626]

Indian Medical science and arithmetic was highly valued in the west. Greek and Iranian physicians knew Indian medical texts. It is recorded that Barzouhych, a subject from Sassanid King Khusro I's court (531-579 A.D.) visited India for study of medicine.

Meharauli iron pillar, which is standing in the courtyard of Kutub Minar at Delhi, belongs to fourth century A.D. It is standing there, defying the ravages of times, for centuries but not a spot of rust or corrosion on it. Its composition was examined by a committee of experts, who held that, it was beyond the capacity of any Iron foundry in the world of that time to manufacture such a masterpiece.

From Periplus we know that the sword made of Indian steel is proverbial in Arabic literature, showing the highest skills and knowledge of metallurgy. The famous Damascus blade was made from Indian steel.

Ancient South Indian bronzes are praised even now in the whole world not only for their craftsmanship but also for metallurgy. Sultanguanj colossal Buddha in copper is a metallurgical masterpiece and a marvel, still preserved in Birmingham museum.

Harshacharita and Huen Tsang both describe the various types of clothings made in 7th century A.D. silk, cotten, wool and goat's hair. Amarkosha descibes various terms for clothes of different types. Brahitsamhita and Amarkosha describe flourishing art of jewelry. [Classical Age: p.593]

Jawaharlal Nehru describes how the Roman Emperor scolded his daughter for wearing so little clothing on her person, while in fact she was fully clad in Indian made muslin clothing, showing the high degree of skill in textile industry.

It is recorded that, "the Roman beauties, decked in even seven folds of Muslin, and parading themselves on the highways of Rome, became a menace to its morals." and import of Indian textiles had to be banned by Roman Parliament. The ban on imports was necessary also because of balance of payment crisis. Pliny estimates one million pounds sterling drain per year. It resulted in favourable trade balance for India, with a stable gold currency for the Kushana empire.

India was also famous for paints and dyes, which were the products for export. The pictures of Ajanta are famous not only for aesthetic beauty, art and history but also for quality of paints and pigments used.

The science and art of ship building suffered most during "kali varjya". The sea worthy people of south India were great voyagers. They built ships of huge tonnage, traveled to far east, established settlements, colonies and even kingdoms and propagated their faith both brahmnic and Buddhist. All these qualities became futile after imposition of ban on sea travel.

Dhanvantari

In the medical field, the scholars of present time, seem to have forgotten about Jivaka, Nagarjuna, Sushruta, Charaka and Vagbhata (both senior and junior). They appear to give more importance to Dhanvantari. The picture presented of him is not as a medical teacher, but as an imaginary mythological puranik god who sprang up from the churning of ocean of milk by the devas and danavas. **Why the former historical dignitaries are ignored in preference to him will be clear if we bear the fact in mind that all leading names in ancient medicine were Buddhists. So they had to invent a god for Ayurveda.**

However, there is a minor medical work going by name of Dhanvantari. It is a *Nighantu* or a medical dictionary. It is mentioned in Amarkosha, and hence in original form must have preceded the Amarkosha; but its extant form it must be ascribed to a later date. Amar, writer of *Amarkosha,* was according to tradition one of the nine jewels at the court of Vikramaditya, whose very identity it has not yet been possible for scholars to fix beyond all doubt. He is "known as a poet, and was certainly a Buddhist who knew the *Mahayana* and used Kalidasa", as per Winternitz, His date is uncertain but he probably flourished before the eighth century A.D.

Vabhattas, both Senior and Junior, flourished in 7th and 8th century and both were Buddhists, and were great Medical writers. One of their works, *Ashtanga-hryday-samhita* was translated in Tibetan. [Classical Age, p. 321]

Aryabhatta

Aryabhatta, born in 476 A.D., flourished in the centre of Buddhist heart land, i.e. Capital of Magadhan empire, at Pataliputtra, and his *Aryabhatiya* was composed in A.D. 499. He was first to treat Mathematics as a distinct subject and he dealt with evolution and involution, area and volume, progressions and algebraic identities, and intermediate equations of the first degree. He also arrived at a 'remarkably accurate value of PI, viz. 3.1416'

Aryabhatta was also the first to hold that the earth was a sphere and rotated on its axis. For this, he gave a beautiful analogy that to a person travelling in a boat, trees on the shore appear to move in oppoite direction, similarly because earth is rotating on its axis towards east, it appears to us as if the sun moves from east to west. He also explained that the eclipses were not the work of Rahu and Ketu or some other 'rakshasa', but were caused by the shadow of the earth falling on the moon. As we will see later, both these views were rejected and severely condemned by later astrologers like Varahmihira and Brahmagupta.

One of the most important features of Aryabhatta's mathematical system is his unique system of notation. It is based on the decimal place value system, unknown to other ancient people, but now in use throughout the civilized world. Whether Aryabhatta invented the system or merely improved on an existing one cannot be definitely stated. But with the doubtful exception of Bakhshali manuscript, which is referred by some to c. A.D. 200, the earliest use of the system occurs in *Aryabhatiya*, and it is found in all later mathematical works.

Thus till that time, which was the golden era of Buddhism and decline had yet to start, India was in no way inferior or behind any other country of the world, in the field of science.

Buddhist rulers and science

In third fourth century B.C., in the Asokan times, there was great advances in veterinary science. For treatment of elephants, "Palkapya samhita" and for treatment of horses, "Shalihotra samhita" were written.

We find in his edicts, mention of hospitals established by him for men and animals even in far off places in south India. All this shows the growth of Veterinary science in India.

All these show that Indian science was well advanced up to sixth century. One has to ponder over what were the reasons which not only obstructed the progress of science, but also destroyed what was already achieved. One has to understand the history, literature and puranas, and social conditions to find these out.

It is clear from the dates, that the age of progress of science in India was the age of glory of Buddhism. Acharya Charak was the *'rajvaidya'* in the court of Buddhist emperor, Kanishka, of first century A.D. Buddhist philosopher Nagarjuna was also their contemporary. He was also famous physician. The contribution of Charak to "Charak Samhita" is as important as Nagarjuna's contribution to "Sushrut Samhita".

Whatever knowledge of ayurveda was being spread through the oral traditional method of Guru sishya teaching was revised and reduced to writing in the times of Buddhist rulers.

During the early centuries of Christian era, medical science was on zenith. In this development, the contribution of Buddhists was enormous. Through them, the knowledge spread all over the other foreign countries.

Role of Buddhist faith

As a matter of fact, science spreads only when it is free from the fetters of traditions. Lord Buddha had given that freedom to Indian society, that freedom of thought and action. Liberated from the severe caste rules, society was taking keen interest in progress of scientific pursuits.

Jivaka, discussed above, was an infant found on a dung heap, and still could reach such an illustrious position, only because of Buddhist environment. We know in brahmanic tradition, admission to school was based on caste as is seen by examples of Karna, Ekalavya and Satyakama Jabaala.

The situation was quite opposite in Brahmanic teaching institutions, In Brahmanic Gurukulas, as already discussed, there were no criteria for admission apart from the caste of the prospective student and whims and fancies of the teacher. Examples of denial of admission to very meritorious candidates on the basis of caste are seen. Glaring example is

of Eklavya. Not only the guru Dronacharya denied admission to Eklavya, but demanded Eklavya's thumb as gurudakshina for education NOT imparted by him. Many people feel it is irony of fate and mockery of awards, that such a name is associated with highest sports awards in this country today, without any protest from the sufferers of the system.

Second example is of Karna, who got admission to Parashurama's class, which was exclusively reserved for the Brahmins, on false statement of caste. Benefit of his knowledge, labeled as unlawfully obtained, was withdrawal when his caste became known, which ultimately lead to his death.

Example of Satyakama Jabala is mentioned by many orthodox people to erroneously show that education in Upanishadic times was open to low caste people. This is a wrong inference drawn from his story. Satyakama was asked by his guru his caste. His mother sent a word to the guru that she did not know the exact father of the child as she had relations with many people. This frank statement, the guru declared, can only be a statement of a son of a Brahmin. So the admission to the gurukul was done on the basis of Brahmin caste. Not only that, the test applied by him, and his presumption of Brahmin caste, was derogatory to non-Brahmins, because it was his belief that only Brahmins could speak such a truth and non-Brahmins could not have uttered such truth.

Buddhism and Science

Why Science could develop under Buddhism is explained by Kurt F. Leidecker, President Buddhist Center of America, and others, as very aptly observed in "Buddhism and Science". Some excerpts:

"Buddha announced some 25 centuries ago principles which we can glean from an examination of the latest contributions by experts in biology, physics, psychology, and psychiatry. If these were haphazard comparisons, our position would still be polite aloofness. But the remarkable fact is that if reduced to general principles, many statements in the Buddhistic scriptures can be brought in line with modern scientific theories and hypotheses.

"Perhaps one reason is that Buddhist thinking has always enjoyed the greatest freedom untrammeled by dogmatism and authority of any kind, not even that of Buddha himself. We have his words in the *Kalama Sutta* which should be given in the hands of any who write and pronounce

judgment on Buddhism." [Kurt F. Leidecker, "Buddhism and Science", 1984, Foreword- p. ix]

Many wars are not fought for economic reasons, but for faith and religion. By fourth century A.D. Christianity had become dominant ideological force in Western world, with all its dogmas.

"... Science is based on other presumptions. Science observes, describes, establishing the truth on ocular demonstration and verification by experiment which anyone may undertake without the least faith in ultimate results. ..." p. 2 (Ibid. - Introduction by Kirhsinghe)

Religion has waged a war against science who tried to find true nature of world and man, not by looking at what seers have said but by direct reason and experiment.

"Whatever progress has been made in the western world in science and technology, was made not because of faith and belief in supernatural, but largely by rejecting it or being indifferent to it." , (p.2 Ibid.)

"Science is based most assuredly on analysis, that is, scrutinizing every phenomenon and examining every part of it and finding out how it came about. That is exactly what the Buddha did. ..." p. 5. Ibid.

"... The fact is that in the history of Buddhism there has never been any altercation with scientists, and no war has ever been declared on science. ... Warfare between science and Christianity? Yes, there has been too much of it. Warfare between science and Buddhism? Never." p. 5 ff. Ibid.

"Early Buddhist scholars, while the West was wallowing in a Dark Age, were recording the facts about the cosmos that are in near perfect harmony with what is known today by the most competent Western astronomers and astrophysicists." [p. 60. F. Mark Davis, chap.- Buddhism and Cosmology.]

"Science means, literally, knowledge. It is simply the recognition of that truth, knowledge or understanding of the universe can only be defined as the fullest and most accurate we can achieve by concerted use of our sense receptors, our limbs and our brain. ..." [p. 92]

"... Science is the bringing together of all such observations, discoveries, descriptions and analyses, and the continual gathering of more, letting

them all interrelate with each other, to create the very best understanding of the universe that human being can attain." (p. 93 Gerald Du Pre, Ibid)

"We know, as most scientists probably do not, that Buddhism is not a philosophy or a religion. It is not an academic discipline, dealing only in words or other symbols, seeking truth on a piece of paper. And the Buddha is not a deity. His teachings did not come to him from any extrasensory source. Remarkable though he was, he was a man, and learned and achieved all he did by the use of his sense receptors, limbs and brain.

"We can fairly say, then, that Buddhism deals in the same knowledge as science - that which is humanly accessible." [p. 93, Ibid.]

"... He ignored no information, but subjected all information to searching logical analysis. He rejected no method, until he had tried it to its limits and found it no good. Always he observed his own experiences with detachment and ruthless honesty. ..." [p. 94, Ibid.]

"It is this method, his down to earth attitude, this spirit of free enquiry, this combining of logical theory, acute observation and practical application, which has made Buddhism so hard to classify in the past. In the light of the definition above, however, it can be seen that Buddhism shares all these things with science. I see no reason, and I have looked hard for one, why Buddhism should not be termed a science. It is not a religion, or a philosophy, but a science." [p. 94-95 Ibid.]

Modern Science recognizes Sigmund Freud as father of Psychology. They not only ignore the role played by the Buddha in development of psychology by denying the existence of *Atma*, but also forget the practice of meditation and *Vippasana* developed by the Buddha. It is observed:

"Psychology remained a mixture of religion and philosophy until 19th century. Then it began to become a science, by leaving behind the soul, and even the mind, and concentrating upon the study of experience. People such as Wundt, and later Freud and his followers, took experience as their subject, and studied it by the method of introspection. " [p. 95 Ibid.]

"... It would need to be recognized that it is Buddhism, and not psychology, which is the science of experience and that Prince Siddhartha, was the founder and father of this science, not Wundt nor Freud. Moreover, Prince Siddhartha's discovery of a radical cure for

mental disorganization is sufficient, even without his other contributions, to make him the greatest figure in science, and the greatest it is ever likely to have. Whether or not Buddhism historically responsible for the rise of scientific psychology, it does not alter the fact that psychology is only a recent extension of Buddhism." [p. 96, Ibid. chap. - "Buddhism and science" by Gerald du Pre.]

Crusade against Science

There were wars against science in the western world also. But it is in India that the antagonists of science won the war. Brahmins opposed Buddhists, and their relations were so strained on the issue of caste supremacy, that they became bitter enemies of each other. They opposed every thing in which Buddhists were experts, even the science. Dr. Ambedkar very rightly said, "It must be recognized that there never has been a common Indian Culture, that historically there have been three Indias, Brahmanic India, Buddhist India and Hindu India, each with its own culture. It must be recognized that the history of India before the Muslim invasions is the history of a mortal conflict between Brahmanism and Buddhism."

In the far off counties, the Buddhists were getting name and fame, but at home in India, there were efforts to dig out and uproot their moorings. Later when Buddhist became weaker due to internal differences and contradictions, the Brahmins put themselves in citadel, in which the new arrangements were made by which they declared as inferior and degraded all those things, which Buddhists were good at and for which Buddhists were famous for all over the world.

Even science was not spared from this fate. A famous scientist of modern India, Dr. Neelaratna Dhar aptly observes that, the progress of science was obstructed by the decline of Buddhism in India. The help and support received from Buddhist Universities and monasteries to chemical and medical sciences in the hospitals was stopped. After the fall of Buddhism, Brahmins dominated and they denounced, condemned, denigrated and maligned all those things in which the Buddhists had excelled.

In the fight against the Buddhists, *kali varjya* was clamped on this society. Hinduism(Brahminism) got rearranged, and in its new concept, foreign travel was forbidden. All vocations relating to science were declared sacrilegious, blasphemous, heretical and disrespectful. Caste rules, rules of high and low, rules of untouchability and inequality all were made more

and more strict. All knowledge and science was made more secret, secluded, hidden and concealed and every new thought and invention was opposed.

Due to ban on travel to foreign lands, India got cut off from the rest of the world. The society was not like a frog in the pond, before; but due to severance of bonds of communications with the outside world, the stupid injunctions of priests became the words of authority. There is a phrase in Marathi saying, whatever priest tells is east and whenever he says is the new moon day. In such circumstances, it was natural that all scientific progress got suffocated.

The various vocations were graded according to basis of caste hierarchy, white collar jobs were kept by higher castes and the rest of population, the shudras i.e. the working class, the marathas or kunbis, the malis, the telis, the gawalis, the lohars, the sutars, the mangs, the mahars, the chamars, the paradhis, the gonds, the bhils etc. etc. all 'shudras and ati- shudras' in Mahatma Phule's terminology and 'bahujans' in todays terminology, were made the beasts of burden to carry out all activities requiring toil and sweat. By this the prestigious castes lost all links with practical aspects of technology and means of production. All niceties of life, food clothing housing and attendant luxuries, wealth, comfort, and prosperity was concentrated in the hands of three varnas, and to provide these the shudras had to toil and sweat their blood out. All the productive work which is done in western countries by choice, option and preference was done in India as a burden, a charge, an obligation, a stress through a feeling of frustration and pressure of compulsion due to 'purva karma', the deeds of past life. The society was made to believe that those people who do not work with their hands are more civilized, sophisticated, cultured, noble, dignified and worshipable, and have attained that position because of the good deeds they had done in the past lives; the good deeds meant, of course, the preservatin of chaturnarna.

Lord McCauley, some times, is unnecessarily blamed for creating the army of white collared *babus*. The reality is that this germ of white collared arrogance was already in this soil.

Role of Mahabharata

In this important text of Hinduism(Brahminism), medical science, architecture, manufacture of weapons, painting, sculptor, agriculture and animal husbandry has been condemned time and again. In one place it is

even said that, the food given to a *vaidya*, i.e. a physician, in a *shraaddha* becomes unacceptable to the *pitars* like blood and pus. It is clear that till the time of Mahabharata all these vocations were declared mean, contemptible, lowly, humble and ignoble.

There are three types of treatments in ayurveda, they say. Where *rasas* are used is 'daivi', where fruits are used is 'manushi' and the surgery, some modern authors say, was a 'aasuri or rakshasi' knowledge. This is the brahmanic interpretation of later times. If similar sentiments prevailed in the earlier times we would not have seen the prosperity of surgical knowledge at the time of Jivaka and Sushruta etc. Because of this feeling, surgery was despised and hated more and more and so it went to hands of the lower castes in the society.

It is said by Dr. Satya Prakash that science of obstetrics and maternity surgery was well developed at the time of Sushrut. When none in the outside world could think of surgical instruments, Sushrut describes various operations of maternity with these instruments. His advises about maternity are similar to modern ones.

The famous Jivaka of Buddha's time, was expert in maternity science. He was called Kumar Bhrutya Jivaka. Till the Buddhists dominated, the art and science of maternity in ayurveda flourished. After the fall of Buddhism, when Brahmins dominated, they declared this science as dirty and it passed on to the women of low castes. It remained with them till the British came, and still in villages these *dayees* of low castes, i.e. midwives, prevail even today.

The feeling of high and low was so great in the Brahmanas, that even the gods had been divided into castes, high and low. Ashwani kumars were declared shudra gods, not eligible to take part in drinking soma by Indra, who was considered ksatriya. As they were physicians, this profession degraded them to the status of shudras.

In west, all the scientist were sons of ordinary working class people, like carpenter, blacksmith, cobbler, barber etc. These professions were never considered degraded. With us, the working class was always degraded castes. If they had been given some encouragement and motivation in technological fields, science in India would have flourished.

The science develops by spread of thought, but in India, there was more of secrecy to guard it from lower castes. Nobody having any useful

knowledge wanted to part with his knowledge. It was within Guru and his disciple to start with. When writing came in, around beginning of Christian era, the texts were written in such a script that they were understood by only a few. Example of Varahmihir can be quoted who ordained that only selected disciples should be given such knowledge, and see that it does not pass even to his son. How much knowledge is lost in darkness, nobody can guess.

Science deals with physical world, but we were taught that world is unreal only the god was real. This raised the armies of sadhus, who were interested in philosophy and bhajan kirtan and their subject was in the world here after. They were not interested in science as world was 'mayajal' for them.

With perhaps a solitary exception of Bhaskaracharya of 12 to 14th century, there was not a single activity in the sphere of scientific knowledge, roughly from sixth century, up to 19th century when the British came,

Some people like to blame Islam for this decline in science. It is wrong to say so. Decline had started much before the Muslims came. We became slaves afterwards, we were withered and wrinkled much before that time due to our internal weaknesses. The reasons of decline of science in India are also the reasons for its defeats and political fall and are responsible for the slavery, this land suffered for centuries.

Creation of Illiteracy

We have already discussed how India became and remained illiterate for centuries, without formal education, without the schools, books and planned materials and literacy because formal education was confined to study of to Vedas alone, in schools meant only for Brahmins, as they propagated that there was no knowledge outside Vedas. Education of rest was neglected by the state and was imparted by their parents. According to laws of Manu, reading and writing has become the right of few high caste men and illiteracy has become the destiny of low caste multitudes.

Fate of Aryabhatta

One need not confuse between astronomy and astrology in ancient India, because both went by the name of 'jyotisha'. If the study of astronomy would have progressed in normal way, we would have achieved

tremendous progress in space technology. But the blind faith in stars and imaginary 'loka's led to ruin of this science.

We know that Vedas declare that earth is stationary and sun is moving. We know the word 'achalaa' for earth, we also know the horses for the 'ratha' of sun. In spite of such ideas in Vedas, astronomers like Aryabhatta in fifth century A.D. declared, as mentioned above, that earth is moving and sun is stationary, and explained how lunar and solar eclipses take place. The priestly class saw danger to their livelihood, if Vedas were found fallible. They organized a crusade against Aryabhatta, in two ways.

Brahmagupta (c. 598 A.D.) criticized and asked, if earth is moving, where is it going to and by which way. Varahmihir (c. 600 A.D.) wrote, if earth is moving the birds would not reach their nests in the evening. If the earth is rotating fast towards east, the flags would always fly towards west, and if it is rotating slowly, it would not complete rotation in 24 hours. Same arguments were repeated by another acharya, Lallacharya in seventh eighth century A.D. He also said if earth moves towards East, the arrow shot in the sky would fall on the West and that the clouds would move West. If earth is moving slowly, how would it complete rotation?

Even Bhaskaracharya (some time between 1114 and 1400 A.D.) totally denied that earth can move. He said Earth is fixed. As Sun and fire are hot, as Moon is cold, as water flows, as stone is hard, similarly it is natural that earth is fixed. So much so that word 'achalaa' became a alternate term for earth.

Thus Aryabhatta was ridiculed and criticized with wrong logic. Not only that, but in 10th century a fraud was committed, a fake copy of 'Aryabhatiya' was prepared declaring earth as 'achalaa', and later it was declared that this is his real text of Aryabhatta. The fraud is clear as the real point is, if Aryabhatta had originally said, in the first place, that earth is 'achalaa', why was he ridiculed, condemned and denounced for about five hundred years.

Thus astronomers, or so called 'jyotirvids' were denounced from all angles whenever opportunity presented. They were declared mean, lowly and contemptible, they were declared polluted, they were denied all respect and their means of livelihood were withdrawn. They were prohibited from being called to *yadnyas*, *mahadanas* and *shraadhas*. The rearer of goats, painters, vaidyas and watchers of stars must not be respected though they might be learned like a brahaspati, so says Atrisamhita.

Mahabharata says those Brahmins who study the stars must not be allowed to sit in the line with for meals in *shraadha*. (Anushasan parva, 90, 11/12) Manu III. 172, 167 declared those as lowly, contemptible and unfit for yadnas and shraadha. Nirnaya sindhu 3, and Vivek sindhu 3, also declare them unfit for being called in yadnyas and shraddha. They are also condemned and ridiculed by Brihit samhita (2-2).

These 'daivadnyas' not only deceived the masses but also the rulers, and condemned the 'jyotirvids'. They were cunning and talked glibly. Varahmihir says, he should be clever, bold, quick witted, irrepressible, smart and shrewd. They were very near the political powers and so nobody could touch them.

Still the public respected the jyotirvids, so the Brahmins changed the meaning of the word jyotirvidya, which now meant those who study the 'effects' of stars on human beings contrary to the original meaning of study of stars, and themselves became *'daivaidnyas'*, - the knowers of fate. This stopped the progress of astronomy which died a natural death.

Not only that, daivadnyas later declared the means of controlling and changing fate by *shanti, mantras* and *yadnya* etc. Varahmihir describes the many qualities for daivadnya, like *shantik* - mantras for removing calamities, *poustik* - mantras for increasing health wealth etc., *abhichar* - means of punishing the enemies. It might be interesting to know that even God's images are classified accordingly into Yoga, Bhoga, Veera or Abhicharaka types. [For details see K. Jamanadas: 1991: 57]

Still the common people criticized these fortune tellers. So they declared such critics as *'nastika', 'mlencha', 'chandala'* etc. and pronounced them of *'sankara yoni'*. This stopped all progress of astronomy. Everybody knows that *'varna sankara'* is a big abuse of ancient India, and a greatest punishment in civil life. These people were boycotted and were compelled to lead an isolated life of a beast.

Thus astronomy or mathematical *Jyotish* was driven away by the *'falit jyotishya'*, which provided bread and butter to Brahmins and is still doing it. This 'falit' jyotishya has made Indians mere fatalists. Whereas in other countries, everybody exerts his own effort to change the unfavorable surrounding environment, we, in India, are more in search of Rahu and Ketu. Even today, the same thing prevails, and we find the dignitaries changing the direction of entrances to their residences and timing the oath ceremonies to match the timings of the stars. For the first time after

centuries, Aryabhatta was honoured by Indian scholars, when the first ever Indian satellite was sent to orbit was named after him.

Why only science suffered

Dr. Gorakh Prasad writes that after Bhaskaracharya, it was considered a sin to make any progress. To find errors in old texts and correct them and to search for new things was totally banned. When such a thing was brought up, the Brahmins of Kashi opposed vehemently.

Some people unburden themselves by putting blame on 'foreigners', meaning Muslims, for this fall of science, but history tells us that our other activities, other than science, did not change much. Why only science suffered? Not that we had no scholars. There were fights, disputes and clashes in *'shastrartha'*. The very word 'shastrartha' applied to debates, denotes that no new facts are to be discussed, whatever is to be discussed must be to find the real 'artha' i.e. the meaning, of the old 'shastras'.

The philosophical texts abounded by constant churning. Puranas and smritis were compiled, edited and reedited. Various commentaries were written amending old laws. And a lot of discussion took place on poetry. The literary innovations of metre and rhyme is plentiful in the drama and poetry of the time, and the intricacies of art and *'alankaras'* were invented, which no other country has done. Poets and scholars spent their effort and capacity in observing most minute details of female anatomy and portraying it in texts, and such poets are compared with literary merit of Shakespere. Then why this ban on science alone?

The reason becomes apparent when you view the society in proper perspective. The society was divided into six thousand castes, all placed one above the other, with Brahmin at the top, who also did every thing to maintain its supremacy. The real reason of fall of science was that, the science and technology brings comfort to common masses, which our *acharyas* did not want. They were self centered in their own domination over the masses and their Rajput - neo-Kshatriya masters were after life of comforts and luxury throughout the period of alien rule. The threat to these comforts was considered danger to the 'dharma'. It might be an interesting subject for study, as to what were the various things which were consideed as 'danger to dharma' in course of our history. If these gods on the earth and their disciple rulers would have thought of broader welfare of masses,

and incorporated these problems in their agenda, the science would not have suffered, neither the country would have been slave for centuries under a fistful of individuals of alien faith. [Most references from Sarita Mukta Reprints]

Chapter 13

KASHMIR PROBLEM HAS ORIGIN IN FALL OF BUDDHISM
The Kashmir Problem

Kashmir problem is one which is consuming a lot lives, time, money and resources of Indians and Pakistanis since Independence. Various wars have been fought on the issue, but still there is no solution to it in sight. It is worth noting that the origin of the problem seems to be creation of two countries out of undivided India in 1947.

Majority population of Kashmir had already become Muslim long before Akbar anexed Kashmir to his Empire in 1557 A.D., and it became a Moghul summer holiday resort during reign of Jahangir and Shahjehan. Nadirshah conqurred and anexed it to his Afghan kingdom in 1639 A.D. After the Sikhs' tenth Guru Govindsingh's religious movement of Khalsa, a powerful Sikh dynasty was established by Ranjit Singh in Punjab. He conquered Kashmir in 1819 A.D., ending the Muslim rule there.

Hindus made Punjab a slave country

Ranjitsingh ruled Punjab for forty years. Whole of India, the Rajputs, Rohilas, Gorkhas, Marathas and Mughals all of them, one by one, surrendered to the British. But still Punjab remained independent till 28th March 1849. Ranjitsingh died on 27th June 1839, but the Sikhs kept on fighting against the British. The discredit of pushing Punjab into slavery falls on three Dogra brothers - Gulab Singh, Dhyansing and Suchetsingh. "With the greedy intention of establishing a Hindu Raj", these Dogra brothers - and specially Dhyansing killed Chetsingh Bajawa, who was running the administration for son of Ranjitsingh. Then they killed Naunihalsingh the son of Khadagsingh. They allowed Chandra Kaur, the widow of Khadagsingh to rule for a month and a half only, and then killed her. Afterwards they also killed Shersingh, the second son of Maharaja Ranjitsingh, and his son Pratapsingh. Dogras also killed Ajitsingh Sandhavaliya, a close relative of Chandrakaur. While the Sikhs were keeping up the fight with British and sacrificing their lives to save their homeland, for two months from 18th December 1845 to 10th February 1846, the Dogras were bargaining with the British. Ultimately Gulabsing Dogra, not only surrendered himself but made Deelipsingh, the last heir of Ranjitsingh to surrender on 29th March 1849. As a reward of this, the British sold him the province of Jammu and Kashmir for 2,50,000 pounds sterling, and returned the treasury of Suchetsingh. Thus the Punjab got slavery and

the Dogras got the province of Jammu and Kashmir. [Bali: 1988: 248]

Gulabsingh's son Ranveersingh succeded him in 1857, he anexed Gilgit province to Kashmir in 1885. His son Pratapsingh died in 1925 A.D. and Harisingh came on throne, who ruled till accession to Indian Union after the British left.

But the real origins of Kashmir problem are from the times when Kashmir population became Muslims. It is well known that Kashmir in ancient times was ruled by Buddhist and Brahmanic kings and its population was mostly non-Muslim. The story how it became Muslim is very interesting and also illuminating because it denotes the tendency of the propagators of *varna* supremacy in establishing caste system. Let us, therefore, trace the history of Kashmir.

Nagas in Pre-historical times

It is now well established that pre-Aryan Harrapan culture was a Naaga culture, and India was a Naagabhumi. It was during reign of sixth king of Naaga dynasty, king Ajatsatru, ruling Magadha, that the Buddha was born in 623 B.C. He also belonged to a Naaga kula. The matter is discussed by us in more detail previously. Kashmir also was inhabited by Naagas, who later became Buddhists.

Naagas in Mahabharata

It is an accepted fact, that Mahabharata had minimum three revisions as per brahmanic scholars, along with Gita in it. As a matter of fact, scholars like Khare, an ardent student of Gita from Pune, has differentiated the verses of Gita of each of three authors, in his book, "The Quest of Gita". Western scholars like Kaegi believe that the epics continued to be interpolated upto 13th century and even to the beginning of current century.

Therefore, it is no wonder that Rhys Davids finds it difficult to assign particular verses to Mahabharata depicting state of affairs in seventh century B.C. at the time of rise of Buddha. [Rhys Davids, p. 214] He feels the changes made by priests were "because the priests found that ideas not current in their schools had so much weight with the people that they (the priests) could not longer afford to neglect them." The objects of priests in doing so were:

"...in the first place to insist on the supremacy of the brahmins, which had been so much endangered by the great popularity of the anti-priestly views of

the Buddhists and others; and in the second place to show that the brahmins were in sympathy with, and had formally adopted, certain popular cults and beliefs highly esteemed by the people. In any case, there, in the poem, these cults and beliefs, absent from the Vedic literature, are found in full life and power. ..." [Rhys Davids, "Buddhist India", p. 214]

Mahabharata opens with a curse on Naagas

To start with, this epic poem opens, with a curse on the serpents. **Poet uses the words so cleverly that, if carelessly read, the curse could appear to be on reptiles and not on human worshipers. But in reality it is a curse on the Naaga people.** In Adi parva the word used is "Naaga" and in Vana parva, where Bhima gets in trouble with Nahusha in the form of a real serpent, it is "sarpa". [Fergusson, p. 47, fn.]

"the story of great sacrifice for the destruction of the serpents is so mixed up with historical and human action that it is evident at once that the ambiguity about the name is only seized upon by the Hindu poets as an excuse for introducing the super natural into an ordinary human transaction, ..." [Fergusson, p. 47]

Immediately after the introductory passages, the story Naaga races starts with two sisters Kadru and Vinata marrying Rishi Kashyapa. Kadru, the eldest, becomes mother of 1,000 Naagas, from whom originates the whole Naaga race. Important among the names of her decedents are Sesha, Vasuki, Airavata, Takshaka, Karkotaka, Kaaliya, Aila or Elaapatra, Nila, Anila, Nahusha and others. The younger sisters gives birth to garuda, who becomes a powerful enemy of Garuda race.

"When divested of all poetical garb and mythological rubbish", Ferguson believes that the heroes Mahabharata, "Lunar race" are of second horde of Aryan race comming to India, comming about 1000 years after purer "Solar race", their original seat traced near north of Peshawar, however, has shown all of Buddhistic sculptures of Bactrian influence. [Fergusson, p. 59]

They passed through Punjab and settled at Hastinapura. In the first transaction with Naagas, they burn the forest Khandava, for making place for a second capital and dislodge the Naagas there. The Naagas were protected by a **Buddhist deity** Indra. But attacked by Vedic god Agni, the brahmin poet depicts that all Naagas perished except their king Takshaka. [Fergusson, p. 60]

The relations with the Pandus and Naagas were most friendly as seen by Arjuna, marrying first Ulupi, the daughter of a Naaga king at the foot of Himalayas, near Hurdwar, and marrying Chitrangada, daughter of Chitravahana, the Naaga king of Manipur. By her, he had a son, Bhabra-vahana, who played a strange part subsequently, during Arjuna's Ashwamedha. From these and other minor particulars, Fergusson feels, "the author of Mahabharata wished to represent the Aryans of that day as cultivating friendly relations with the aborigines." [Fergusson, p. 60]

The quarrel between Aryans and Naagas started when Parikshit insulted a hermit by hanging a dead snake around his neck. Hermit's son invoked Takshaka, who is represented as king of Takshashila. Takshaka bit the king to death to avenge the insult. Janmejaya started the great sacrifice for destruction of the Naagas to avenge the assassination of his father. Thousands - myriads - had already perished when slaughter was stayed at the intervention of Astika, a Brahmin, though nephew of Vasuki, a Naaga king of east. [Fergusson, p. 60]

The site of the Naaga sacrifice of Janmejaya is said to be Kurukshetra, but it is more probable that the site is in Orrisa, at Agrahaut. Here the tradition of Mahabharata is preserved by images of kings, who could not be present on the occasion. And the serpent worship is still prevalent in the region. [Fergusson, p. 61]

Naaga Rajas in Kashmir

Kashmir has always been considered as "Naag bhumi". Ferguson mentions that a century before Christ, king Damodara, as per Raj Tarangani, was converted into a snake because he offended some brahmin, and also mentions many Naaga kings. [Fergusson, p. 45]

When Huen Tsang entered the valley in 632 A.D. during the reign of Baladitya, Buddhism was flourishing, though the King was against Buddhism. He repeats the usual story of valley being a lake in the past, but adds that fifty years after the Nirvana of the Buddha, a disciple of Ananda, converted the Naaga Raja, who quitted the tank, built 500 monasteries, and invited bhikkus to dwell in them. [Fergusson, p. 46]

Buddhism in Ashokan period

Wherever Buddhism spread, it always spread by persuation and never by force. Kashmir was no exception. Ferguson has observed:

"No war was ever waged by Buddhists, ... No faith was ever so essentially propagated by persuation as that of Buddha, and though the Buddhists were too frequently persecuted even to destruction, there is no instance on record of any attempt to spread their faith by force in any quarter of globe." [Fergusson, p.63]

Kashmir was in Ashoka's empire. A bhikku, named Majjhantiko, was sent to Kashmir and Gandhara by Ashoka after Third Sangiti (Council) in 253 B.C. Aravaalo, the Naaga king ruling there, tried to terrify the bhikku, but was ultimately converted to Buddhism. [Fergusson, p. 47]

The first people to get converted were the Naaga tribe of Kashmir out of 14 tribes there. That is the reason why Naaga is a suffix of many places in Kashmir, such as Anant Naaga, Sheshanaaga, Neelanaaga, Naagabal, Kokaranaaga, Sukhanaaga etc. [Gayakwad: 1990: six] **It was Ashoka, who established the city of Srinagar, says Rajtarangini. His son Jalouk became king of Kashmir, who built "Krutyakama vihara". Kashmir was under King Milinda, who had discussions of "Milind-pannaha", 12 yojanas away from Kashmir valley.** Two Kushana kings, Hushka and Jushka also ruled in Kashmir, before Kanishka. [ibid. p.53]

Time of Naagaarjuna and Kanishka

Naagaarjuna was the ruling spirit behind the Fourth Buddhist Council held under Kanishaka, though Vasumitra was the President, at Kundanvana near Srinagar. Mahayana started after this Council. Cannon was compiled in *Mahavibhasha*. It is said:

"the words uttered by the Sakya Muni during his life time, had been heard and noted down by the Naagas, and have kept them to themselves in their own abode, till such time as mankind would become worthy to receive them. Naagaarjuna gave out that he had received these documents from the Naagas and was commissioned to proclaim them to the world. ..." [Fergusson, p. 65]

The cannon was engraved on copper plates, some of which having 300 verses have been found lately. First Buddha image was made in Kanishka's reign in Kashmir. Coins of Kanishka have image of standing Buddha with the words "Boddo" on the obverse. [Vijay Gayakwad, p.seven]

The Naaga and Buddhist influence persisted till Moghul times as Abdul Fazal tells us in "Ayeene Akbari", that during reign of Akbar (1556-1605), there

were temples in Kashmir, 45 of Shiva, 65 of Vishnu, 3 of Brahma, 22 of Durga, but 700 of the Naagas, in active worship. All this is confirmed by the architecture of the valley. [Fergusson, p.47]

Christ in Kashmir

There is a vast body of evidence to suggest that Jesus Christ came to India at the age of 14 years or so, lived in India and learned tenets of Buddhism from Bhikkus in India, returned back home at the age of 32, preached in his home country for about three years and was crucufied, survived the crucification and came back to Kashmir and died in Kashmir at ripe old age. His grave is shown to be present in Kashmir. [See for details: "Jesus Lived in India"]

Guptas and Hunas Times

During Imperial Guptas, Kashmir remained as before. It was not conqurred by Samudragupta and did not form a part of Gupta Empire. The White Hunas attacked India but were repulsed back by Skandgupta. Tormana and Mihirkula are considered to be Hunas. Tormana, a wise stateman, revived the lost fortune of Hunas and established vast empire in short time. He was tollerant in religious affairs. His son Mihirkula succeeded in 515 A.D. and ruled from Sakala. He later grew hostile to Buddhism and ordered destruction of "all bhikkus through five Indies, overthrow Law of Buddha and leave nothing remaining". He was defeated by Yashodharman as per Mandsore inscription. Huen Tsang narrates how Gupta King Baladitya defeated and captured Mihirkula but let him go on intercession of his mother. Mihirkula obtained asylum in Kashmir and later usurped the throne of Kashmir. He persecuted Buddhists all over, and also invaded Sri Lanka to avenge the assumed insult, as his queen was wearing a garment from Ceylone having foot mark of Buddha, on her bosom. He died around 550 or thereafter, and with him was lost Huna power. Hunas lasted for a short time but destroyed unity of India breaking it into many states and later remenents of Hunas were converted by Brahmins as Rajputs to fight against the Buddhists. The present author believes that untouchability started around this time, as Buddhist became very weak after tyranny of Hunas. As is well known, Dr. Ambedkar assigns the time of 200 to 600 A.D. for this event.

Times of Harshavardhana

We saw Huen Tsang visiting the region in Harshavardhana's time around 632 A.D., when Buddhism flourished there. Whether Kashmir directly formed a

part of Harsha's empire is debatable and Dr. R. K. Mookerji thinks it was a dependency of Harsha and feels that Kashmir had acknowledged suzernity of Harshavardhana as Harsha compelled the King of Kashmir to part with a relic of Buddha. [Mahajan, "Ancient India", p. 532]

Later Kings

After Mihirkula, a powerful dynasty took over Kashmir and Lalitaditya Muktapida of Karkota dynasty was its prominent ruler around 724 A.D. He defeated Yashovarman of Kanouj. Jaypida or Vinayadittya was his grandson who had many conquests. His court was graced by many scholars. A conspiracy of Brahmanas brought about his end. Avantivarman of Utpala dynasty (855-883 A.D.) was a famous king for patronage to literature and public works. Shankarvarman (883-902 A.D.) was man of war and plundered temples. [Mahajan, "Ancient India", p. 550]

After this dynasty came to end, Yashakara ruled, who built monastry for students comming from Aryadesha to Kashmir. His designing minister Parvagupta persuaded him to abdicate in favour of Sangramdeva. Yashkara went to monastry where he was poisoned and Parvagupta captured the throne by killing Sangramdeva. Parvagupta's son Kshemagupta married Didda, a daughter of King of Lohara. She acted as a Regent for her child king Abhimanyu after death of her husband, and ruled with a strong hand. When Abhimanyu died leaving three sons, all three were eliminated one by one, by Didda, who ascended the throne in 980 A.D. Appointment of Tunga, a former herdsman, as her Prime Minister displeased the Brahmins, who brought in a son of her brother from Lohara to help them against Tunga. But queen Didda bribed the Brahmins heavily and won them back. She died in 1003 A.D. in old age and throne went to Sangramraja, a son of her brother, from Lohara, thus starting a First Lohara Dynasty. [D. C. Ganguli, "Age of Imperial Kanauj", p. 120]

History of Kashmir before Muslim Invasion

Kashmir was one of most vigourous centres of Buddhism and bhikkus from there used to go to China and Tibet and other parts of central Asia. After persecution of Buddhists in Tibet by Glan-dar-ma, it fell upon Kashmiri *sramanas* to reinstruct the masses there after a century. Many *sramanas* went to China in tenth and eleventh centuries and translated Buddhist scriptures into Chinese and also presented to the Emperor a branch of Bodhi tree from Gaya. Two big Buddha images installed in capital Parihaspura by previous kings were the objects of adoration for Buddhists even in eleventh

century. These two images escaped destruction at the hands of king Harsha (1089-1101 A.D.), who was keen on destroying temple images, two centuries before Muslim rule was established, and had appointed special officers for the purpose designated as *devotpaatana-nayaka* or "perfect for destruction of gods", and who was labled by Kallahana as "that Turushka". [Struggle for Empire, p. 665]

But king Jayasimha (1128-1155 A.D.) broke down the images and burned the vihara of Arigon near Srinagara. Famous Jayendra vihara and Raja-vihara played important role in eleventh century, but the more important ones were Ratnagupta and Ratnarashmi vihars in 11th and 12th centuris, where large number of Mahayana scriptures were translated into Tibetan. But various Aacharyas of Tantrik Buddhism flourished in the valley of Kashmir. Also florished Kshemendra who depicted Buddha as avatara of Vishnu and hence his book was discarded as profane by Tibetian Lamas. Kashmir Buddhism also had a tremendous effect on both the Kashmir schools of Shaivism. [N. N. Das Gupta, "The Sruggle for Empire", p.419 ff.]

Islamic influence

Arab invasion in 712 A.D. of Sind, over king Dahir, hardly left any marks in India, but Ghaznavid invasion, three centuries later has left permenent scars. Various invasions took place and Sultanate was established in Delhi in 1206 A.D. In spite of opposition of orthodox Muslim religious heads and also of royal princes, the Sufi cult flourished. The Sufi cult, which should be given the credit of making many devotees from Hindus also, was founded by the saints. The founder of the cult is supposed to be Data Ganj Bakhsha of Lahore, who died in 1072 A.D. Khwaja Muin-ud-din Chishti of Ajmer, who came from Gazni in 1161 A.D., acknowlwdged his greatness. The followers of this cult were called *Chishtis*, who spread all over and included both muslims and hindus. Another school of *Surhavardis* was established, and one of them became famous for Hindus as Raja Bharaatri in Sind. Other groups also emerged. All these mystic saints spread all over India from Gujrath to Bengal and from Kashmir to Trichonapalli, in a short period and their disciples were both from Muslims and Hindus, specially of lower castes. [Sruggle for Empire, p.488 ff.] The masses, majority of whom were all Buddhists, by that time came to be called as "Hindus" by Muslims, and their leadership instead of of going to victor Muslims, went to Brahmins. They found solace in egalitarian teachings of these Sufis, which led to foundation of bhakti cult in India. The credit of converting Kashmir to Islam goes to one such saint *fakir* Bulbulshah.

Troubled times in Kashmir

Two Lohara Dynasties ruled Kashmir in eleventh century onwards. None of them were strong monarchs, there was internal fights and a kind of anarchy developed. Buddhism declined during first Lohar Dynasty. Poet Kshemendra describes that Buddhist nuns were adoring themselves.

Second Lohara dynasty (1101-1339 A.D.) tried to revive Buddhism to some extent. Some Viharas were built. Kalhana wrote "Rajtarangini" during this period. Bulher mentions of a Buddhist Bhikku known as Jinendra Buddha at Barahmulla in 12th century. [Vijay Gayakwad, p.59]

Last king of second Lohara dynasty was Vantideva (1165-1172) After him people elected one Vuppadeva as King. One of his decendents was poisoned by his officer, and there were many rivals to the throne, who ruled from different parts of Srinagar. One Ramdeva came to throne in 1252 A.D., who adopted a brahmana Laxmandeva as as his son. Laxmandeva was killed by a Muslim ruler Kajjala in battle in 1286 A.D., after which complete anarchy broke out. One Simhadeva established authority but lost his life in a love intrigue, and his brother Suhadeva, who "showed abject cowardice all along", came to power in 1301 A.D. Dulucha, a comander of King of Kandahar overran Kashmir and left with a lot of Kashmirians as slaves. Rinchana, a Tibetian plundered the capital at the same time and assumed royal power, but died in 1323 A.D. His son Haidara was deposed by his officer Sahamera, who placed Udayandeva, a stooge, on throne and ultimately seized the throne in 1338 after death of Udayandeva, and ruled as Shams- ud-din. His successors ruled for a long time. [Struggle for Empire, p.102]

Sam-ud-din (1338-1355) reduced land revenue to one sixth and became popular, making many Muslims. Shahabuddin (1355-1374), who came on throne showed respect to Buddhism by declining to accept the advice of his Brahim minister Udayshree to melt the golden images of Buddha to strike coins. The Brahmin minister, it seems, even under such trying conditions had not forgotten his contempt of Buddhism. But later, Suhabhatta, another Brahmin minister of later king Sikandar (1390-1414), got all Buddha images melted. However, Suhabhatta himself got converted to Islam by Syed Md. Hamdani, assumed the name of Saifuddin, and surpassed the Maulavis in harrasing Buddhists. Later kings harrassed Hindus and Buddhists till Kashmir passed over to Akbar. [Vijay Gayakwad, p.61]

After Shamsudin, Islam became the state religion. After this, it did not

take very long for the general masses of Kashmir, who were already smarting under Brahmanic tyranny of caste, to get converted into Islam. Bulbulshaha is said to have converted ten thousand people to Islam. [Vijay Gayakwad, p.125]

Another important religious saint was Syedali Hamadani, who was called "Ameer Kabir" i.e. Great Ameer, who is said to have converted 37,000 people. Born in 1314 in Iran, he was well learned, well travelled and visited Kashmir on three occasions. He is said to have come last time in 1383 A.D. as a refugee along with seven hundred other Seyds who were warmly welcomed by the then ruler Kutubuddin. Syedali insisted on Islamic culture and manners. Majarity of people had embraced Islam by the begining of 15th century, avers Setu Madhavrao Pagdi. All these conversions were mostly voluntary. [Vijay Gayakwad, p. 126]

Views of Kancha Ilaiah of Osmania University about spread of Islam are worth consideration. He observes:

"... Islam seems to have emerged more as a reaction to the Vedic inequality as an anti-caste social synthesiser. Brahmins of India not only appear to have been authors of "natural inequality" but were also the first propagandists of that theory on the globe. ... The birth of Islam, it appears to me, has taken place to establish a total civil societal homogenisation within the sphere of religion. It put the religious equality of the people who embraced it on much more solid foundations. This could have been one of the reasons why more and more SCAs (Shudras, Chandalas and Adivasis) embraced Islam in India in the second millennium. If Muslim rulers were to force the Indians to embrace Islam they would have easily changed this country into an Islamic one. Or had they forced all the BKVs (Brahmins, Kshatriyas and Vaishyas) to convert to Islam, their job would have been accomplished. But even in their eight hundred years of hegemonic rule, they did not do that. What attracted SCAs to Islam is its religious democratic culture - the culture of *aa gale milna*." ["Meantime", Jan. 11, 2000, p.38]

There are many scholars who try to depict Muslim rulers merely as tyrants converting Hindus to Islam by force. The point to understand is you can convert people forcibly, but you can not retain them forcibly. So Kancha Ilaiah's analysis of Islamic invasions appears to be more rational.

Muslims could have been, to some extent, themselves influenced by the Hindus, as seen by non-circumscision of some dignitaries. Dr. Ambedkar who considered Hindu Muslim relationship as a kind of caste discrimination, while

commenting on inter caste marriage of grand daughter of Bhandarkar with a Muslim youth, observed that it is not always the bride side that is subdued. He quotes example of reformists who claim that they can not do certain reform as their wives do not approve of it. He also quotes the example of Moghul kings marrying Hindu women and observes that it could be said that the Moghul Emperors themselves observed Hindu manners, **as right from liberal Akbar to orthodox Aurangjeb, no Moghul Emperor had undergone the circumcision**. [Quoted from *Bahishkrit Bharat* by Kasbe: 1994: 36]

How Kashmir became Muslim country

But who was this Shahmera and how he became an officer in court of King Suhadeva? He was son of one Ratanju, whose details are given in an article by Santram. The same story is repeated by Sundarlal Sagar in his hindi book *"hindu sanskruti me varna vyavastha aur jati bhed"*, on the authority of a great scholar Ramdhari Simha Dinkar ["Hindu Sanskruti" - ch.4, p.269]. From the story, though he is said to have no religion or nationality, it seems he was a Buddhist as he was neither a Hindu nor a Muslim, and must have been considered of a low caste as he was not acceptable to the pundits of Kashmir as a ruler. The story runs as follows:

"In thirteenth century, a boy of tender age by name Ratanju came to Kashmir. Somehow, he got a place in the court of king Sahadeva and reached a high rank. He had neither any religion, nor any nationality of his own. Moulana Mohammed Kazam Muradabadi writes in his history book, that Ratanju had a great love for Hindu religion. He wanted to embrace it. But the Hindus were not ready to accept him in their society. He used to listen to story of Gita every day from the pundits.

"One day the pundit, while explaining him the meaning of verse 47 of chapter 18, told him that it is fearful to accept another man's better religion and one must not leave ones own religion though it had many disabilities. On this Ratanju asked, 'Can I not join your religion?' The pundit said 'Absolutely not'. Getting disappointed by this reply, Ratanju resolved to accept the religion of the person, whom so ever he will see first one in the morning. One muslim *fakir*, by name Bulbulshah, got to know the decision of Ratanju. Next morning he went to the palace of Ratanju. On seeing him Ratanju came down and asked him, 'Would you accept me in your religion?'

" 'The door of Islam is open to all human beings. A prominent political officer wishes to become my brother in religion *(dharma bandhu)*. What could be

more pleasing thing for me other than this', replied Bulbulshah. Ratanju became muslim. His son Shahamir usurped the throne and brought home forcibly the queen Kona, wife of king Sahadeva's son. But the queen committed suicide by stabbing herself. It is said, those pundits, who refused to become muslims, were put in gunny bags and drowned in river Jehlam by Ratanju and Shahamir. The place in Shrinagar where they were drowned, is famous even now by the name of *'watta mazaar'*." [Santram, Sarita Mukta Reprint series, (Hindi) vol. 8, p.162.]

Thus we see that because the leaders of perpetuaters of inequality did not consider even the people of high ability who have gained prominence on account of their bravery and heroism, fit to become kings, unless they are born in higher caste.

Similar thing happened in Maharashtra in 17th century, when king Shivaji was refused by the brahmins of Maharashtra to be coronated as a king because of low caste. One shudders to think, what would have been the fate of India, had Shivaji met somebody like Bulbulshah that time.

Similar is the story of Shahu Maharaj of Kolhapur in late 19th century, when he was insulted by the priest on account of caste, and his insult was accentuated by the so called 'national' lobby of the great "Lokamanya" Tilak from Poona supporting the cause of the priest against the Maharaja. Fortunately for the Hindus, Shahu did not turn to Islam or Christianity, he turned to Arya Samaj, which he thought, rather naively, was a remedy of ills of Brahmanism. He also strongly supported *"Satya Shodhak"* Movement started by Mahatma Jotirao Phule and also brought forward Dr. Ambedkar and presented him to the Dalits as their leader. The movement started by Shahu later gave rise to a powerful "Non- brahmin Party" which grew in prominence till early 30s when Gandhiji got it merged in Congress.

The above mentioned article of Sarita, mentions two more stories of religious leaders of Hindus refusing to accept meritorious lower caste people to Hinduism(Brahminism) and give them equal status. Thus we see the refusal of a low caste prominent political personality like Ratanju by the Brahmins of Kashmir, led to propagation of Islam in Kashmir with all further complications, for which all further gernerations of Indians may thank the Pundits of Kashmir of those times.

Chapter 14

BRAHMANISM CONTROLLED MASSES THROUGH LANGUAGE National Language of India

A lecturer friend of mine, who was trying to convince me that learning becomes easy in student's mother tongue, was taken aback to hear from me that **India does not have a mother tongue, it has mother tongues.** Does India have a national language? Presumably, officially it does, and it is Hindi. How it came to become a national language is described by Dr. Ambedkar, who was present in the Congress Party meeting as Chairman of the Drafting Committee when the Draft Constitution of India was being considered, on the issue of adopting Hindi as the National language:

"...There was no article which proved more controversial than Article 115 which deals with the question. No article produced more opposition. No article more heat. After a prolonged discussion when the question was put, the vote was 78 against 78. The tie could not be resolved. After a long time when the question was put to the party meeting the result was 77 against 78 for Hindi. Hindi won its place as a national language by one vote. I am stating these facts from my personal knowledge. ..." [W&S, 1,148]

It is not known, whether the member had gone out in the mean time and was absent during voting the second time, but surely it does not speak highly of a language to have been declared as "National" under such circumstances. This is specially so, when in practice, **whole of India thinks in English,** may be it is Agriculture, Industry, Law, Medicine, Sports, Commerce, Accounting, Cinema, Literature, Poetry or any other field of life. In the homes of elites, English is not only spoken by children and servants but also their pets like cats and dogs.

Language Problem of India

The question of language is a tricky problem in India. India is a vast country. True. **It was much vaster in ancient times.** Now it has been divided into three countries. In India itself, there are numerous languages. Some of them are official languages and some are struggling to become official. The country is divided into provinces on the basis of language. Gandhiji had promised to do that before independence. So it was done. The strangest thing is that the people fight among themselves on the basis of language, as if the linguistic provinces are two different nations.

Dr. Ambedkar had warned that **there is only a very thin line between linguistic provinces and linguistic nations** and he had suggested some safeguards and remedies to prevent the calamity of converting the linguistic provinces into linguistic nations. Unfortunately no heed was paid to his wise advice. We have to consider whether India was always having multiple languages, and why there are so many languages in India and why does the speech differ every few miles.

Origin of language

Itihasacharya V. K. Rajwade explained that Language originated from sound, script originated from pictures, expression from natural body movements and utensils from the figures seen. All this was invented by the wisdom of man himself by hard work of trial and error, and not due to any imaginary gods or *asuras* in imaginary heaven or hell. That voice originated from *damaru* of Shankara, *Gandhaba-kanya* taught the art of drawing pictures, acting was taught by some *kinnara*, and making of utensils was taught by some imaginary *vishwakarma* are all myth, fantasy and a pack of lies, nothing is divine, all these arts are acquired by man by efforts and by learning from trial and error. [Rajwade: 1994: 106]

Language of masses was different

Mr. Nair explains quoting authorities, that language of the masses is different from that of the "classes". This difference is calculated by the elites for establishing and maintaining their supremacy. As Nair quotes Lapier:

"A language is a system of cultural definition whereby meanings are assigned to a great variety of specific sound combinations thereof and among a literate people, graphic representations thereof. But the members of the society seldom speak or even write in terms of the culturally designated definitions. They speak and write in some special vernacular which differs both quantitatively and qualitatively from the official language i.e. from the language as embodied among a literate people in dictionaries, manuals of grammar and the like". [`*Theory of social control'* p. 261, quoted by Nair B. N., *"The Dynamic Brahmin",* p.68]

Was Sanskrit a spoken language?

Contrary to the recent *hindutwavadi* propaganda, it is a well established fact that Sanskrit was never a spoken language:

"Let us remember that Sanskrit as its meaning indicates was never a spoken language and that it was only a purified version of the language that was in popular usage such as Prakrit, and that its refinement and the codification of grammar in an unalterable form was the work of grammarians like Panini." [Nair:1959: 67]

Even strong protagonists of Sanskrit like Pandit Mishra aver that it was a spoken language but **the "spoken" means, it was spoken by "shishtas"** i.e. elite (meaning Brahmins) alone. Rest of the masses were speaking Prakrit. [Mishra:VS 2023:376] Even in late Sanskrit drammas, as is well known, the characters of higher castes speak Sanskrit, and the others speak Prakrit. So speech depended on the caste.

Views of Prof. Rhys Davids

His opinion is perhaps the consensus opinion and based upon deep study of scriptures, sculptures and epigraphs of ancient India, both Brahmanical as well as Buddhistic. He observes:

"... Priests have preserved for us, not so much the opinions the people actually held, as the opinions the priests wished them to hold. ... What had happened with respect to religious belief is on a par with what had happened with respect to language. **From Takkasila all the way down to Champa no one spoke Sanskrit. The living language, everywhere, was a sort of Pali.** Many of the old Vedic words were retained in more easily pronounceable forms. Many new words had been formed, on analogy, from the existing stock of roots. Many other new word had been adopted from non- Aryan form of speech. Many Aryan words, which do not happen to occur in the Vedic texts, had nevertheless survived in popular use. And mean while, in the schools of the priests, **and there only**, a knowledge of the Vedic language (which we often call Sanskrit) was kept up. But even this Sanskrit of the schools had progressed, as some would say, or had degenerated, as others would say, from the Vedic standard. And the Sanskrit in actual use in the as it is from the so-called classical Sanskrit of the post Buddhistic poems and plays." [Rhys Davids, *Buddhist India*, 1993, p. 211]

He avers that, outside the schools of the priests, the curious and interesting beliefs recorded in the Rig Veda had practically little effect, and Vedic theosophy was never a popular faith. Vedic rituals are not of simpler faith, and are advanced. The gods of the older system - the dread Mother Earth, the dryads and the dragons, the dog-star, even the moon

the sun have been cast into the shade by the new gods of the fire, the exciting drink, and the thunderstorm. The mystery and the magic of the ritual of the sacrifice had complications and expense. [Rhys Davids: 1993: 211]

Max Muller, who believed that thoughts in Rigveda were primitive, as these thoughts are so bizarre and absurd that they cannot be considered as advanced, and one is so accustomed to consider the priesthood as the great obstacle to any way of reform in India, he averred, that it is difficult to believe that the Brahmins could ever, as a class have championed the newer views. Rhys Davids, disagreeing with Max Muller, believed that the beliefs recorded in the Rig Veda are not primitive or original, as proved by comparison with evolution of religious beliefs elsewhere. These beliefs were in the view of the men who formulated them, a kind of advance on the previous ideas. And when the Rig Veda was finally closed there were many other beliefs, commonly held among the Aryans in India, but not represented in that Veda. [Rhys Davids: 1993: 211 ff.]

Social Control through language

The so called "purity" of Sanskrit makes it a dead language, may be true, **but that was the intention of the users, to safeguard their own supremacy over the masses.** Nair exclaims:

"... The maintenance of the purity of Sanskrit language since the days of Panini until the present day is wonder of wonders that is largely to be explained by the tenacity of the Brahmin to preserve it as such, as the sacred language of status group even though their spoken language was, by and large, the local languages or a mixture of the two. This is not to admit that early Sanskrit before it reification did not borrow words from Dravidian languages and made them its own. As a matter of fact detailed research in the linguistic prehistory India is bound to reveal many instances for such a fusion of Tamil words into Sanskrit, especially that style of Sanskrit which came to be used for limited secular purposes." [Nair: 1959: 68]

Sanskrit is static language

Ancient Tamil grammar Tolkapium, Nair says, was a "scientific treatise on grammar" created to "safeguard the system of cultural definitions". Brahmins maintained purity of their language because of the fear of local language of masses. Why did the Brahmins try to keep their language

different from that of the masses? The reason is that they wanted to maintain their supremacy through it. The process is continuing even now. When elites speak of it a "pure" they actually mean "static", and anything becomes static then it merits the title of "dead". Mr. Nair explains the tendency:

"The purity of Sanskrit since the days it assumed its present grammatical shape is to be explained by it static state, as the restricted and sole vehicle of a sacerdotal class who jealously preserved it from the corroding influence of non-Brahmin languages. This they did out of fear as experience had already taught them that in the mutual impact it was Sanskrit that stood the chance of loosing its integrity and getting assimilated with the *"Paisachi"* language which was widely prevalent in the subcontinent of India at the time of their arrival. So then true to the spirit and apostolic motivation of cultural conquerors they set about to conquer the speakers of the language but also the latter's language itself. There is a hymn in the Rig Veda which expresses this wish most solemnly and which may have been recited by countless generations of Brahmins,"May we conquer the ill-speaking man" [Nair: 1959: 69]

Panini was ignorant about history: Rajwade

Itihasacharya Rajwade had done a lot of work not only in history but also in linguistic field. He explained the code language of Mahanubhavas as well as he explained origin of Sanskrit. **He declared that Panini had no knowledge of amalgamation and mixture of primitive societies.** He explained how the use of neuter gender in Sanskrit originated from the mixture of two societies, one having a nasal twang and other without it. While explaining grammar, Rajwade scientifically uses the sociological concepts, and clarifies what Panini could not. He declares boldly that Panini had no historical perspective and that Panini's belief, that Sanskrit is the language of the *devas* and hence *anaadi*, (having no beginning), as "eccentric". He avers that **there is not a single word or a phrase in whole of *ashtadhyai* of Panini, which could suggest that Sanskrit originated from Vedic language.** Panini could not ever think that Sanskrit is the corrupt or hybrid form of Vedic language. Because of this disregard of history, Panini thought there was no world before Vedas, and no time before it. His thoughts are thus opposed to progress and because of his ignorance, the society became dejected about the future. There were many pre-vedic languages, then Vedic, then Panini's Sanskrit, then Prakrit, and regional languages like Marathi etc. is the progressive evolution, but because of Panini's thoughts this was considered as

degeneration. **Panini's *ashtadhyai* is the well known example of how the unhistorical attitude causes the gross damage**, he observes. [Rajwade: 1994: 21]

Ancient language of whole of India was Tamil

Rajwade acknowledges the Aryans have come from outside India and the original indigenous residents were the Naagas. They were expert in drawing pictures, they later married Vedic Aryans and it is customary to include Naaga *vamsha* into the Aryan fold. He also acknowledges the presence of non-Aryan languages like *Asur bhasha, Dravida bhasha*, Chinese and Red Indian and African languages. [Rajwade :1994: 100]

Paishachi language was Tamil is the experts' view. Having made it clear that Paishachi language was a very rich language, and very widely spoken, let us see the experts' views on what was this language. Before Aryans could influence things here, the language of India was "Paishachi", which meant Tamil, and it was spoken from Kashmir to Kanyakumari. Nair observes:

"According to Mr. Oldham there are ample evidences to show that the so-call "Paisachi" language was spoken throughout India. He says "It is evident that the old Sanskrit Grammarians considered the language of the Dravidian countries to be connected with the vernaculars of Northern India; and that in their opinion it was especially related to the speech of those who as we have seen, were apparently descended from the *Asura* tribes. Thus in the *Shahasha Chandrika* Lakshmidhara says that the Paisachi language is spoken in the Paisachi countries of Pandya, Kekaya Vahlika, Sahya, Nepala, Kuntala, Sudarsha, Bota, Gandhara, Haiva and Kangana and these are Paisachi countries. Of all the vernaculars the Paisachi is said to have contained the smallest infusion of Sanskrit". [Nair: 1959:70]

Dr. K. M. Panikar has something equally interesting to say;

"The distribution of the indigenous races even today in the uplands of South Bihar and in the eastern areas of Madhya Pradesh and the persistence of the Bhils in the Aravalli and Vindhya ranges show that as a population momentum the Aryan invasion ceased to have any momentum after it reached the Gangetic valley. The gradual spread of Hinduism(Brahminism) all over India and with it the Aryan speech should not blind us to the fact that even in North India outside the Punjab the

Aryans contributed only a racial strain. In Gujrat and in Maharashtra the neo-Aryans were able to improve their language but in the Deccan and in the South the Dravidian speech not only held its own but was able to drive out the Austric and other linguistic elements. The spread of Aryanism and Sanskrit, originally associated with Agastiyas' crossing of the Vindhyas became, an accomplished fact only in the first centuries of the Christian era as may be seen from the earlier Paisachi tradition of the Satavahana Emperors of Pratishtan" [K. M. Panikker, *Geographical Factors in Indian History*, 1955, quoted by Nair:1959 :70]

Paisachi was Tamil

Nair confirms that Paishachi was Tamil.

"Now we may ask: what could have been this Paisachi language other than the Tamil of pre-Tholkappian epoch? Indeed, the author of Tholkappiyam (who is considered to be a Brahmin himself) felt as much nervous about the vigour of Sanskrit or more possibly Prakrit as the Brahmin Aryans felt consternation about the richness of this "Paishachi" language. In spite of this, it is evident that the two languages could not continue side by side in certain regions without influencing one another for their mutual benefit. Hence it is that we find that rules have been laid down in Tholkappiyam for the adoption of Sanskrit words under certain conditions and subject to certain rules while Prakrit itself normally absorbed certain Dravidian features." [Nair: 1959: 70]

Ashokan India was speaking Prakrit and not Sanskrit

Hindutwavadis like to project that the main stream of Indian thought flows through Sanskrit. This is totally false, as can be seen by historical evidences of epigraphs. Original inscriptions were not Sanskrit. Apart from Ashoka's edicts, the most ancient inscriptions of Arekmedu, which talk of Buddha's teachings, were not in Sanskrit but in Prakrit. Another European authority Dr. J. Filliozat is worth quoting in this respect:

"Even much later, in the first half of the first century of Christian era when appeared **the first dated Tamil inscriptions, those of Virapatnam - Arikamedu near Pondicherry, Sanskrit was not yet current in Tamilanad as the inscriptions in an Indo-Aryan language found along with the Tamil inscriptions are in Prakrit.** These inscriptions are no doubt very short and very few but we can at least be sure that they are exactly comparable with those of Ceylon at the same epoch; here also

middle-Indian was employed and not Sanskrit. The characters of these inscriptions around the beginning of the Christian era the same and very similar in their shapes to the ancient Brahmi of Ashoka, giving supplementary evidence of the importance of the contribution of Ashoka's empire to the culture in the South. [quoted by Nair: 1959: 71]

As late as Pallava times Sanskrit was not used even by Brahmanic Kings like Pallavas. It is worth noting that the earlier Pallava inscriptions are in Prakrit and not Sanskrit.

Sangam literature

Not only the inscriptions, but even the classical Tamilnadu literature of second or third century A. D. was not in Sanskrit, but in Tamil. The same author observes:

"If we now consider the ancient Tamil works, we find in almost all some allusion to vedic or Brahmanic rites and the use of some Sanskrit words though very few. When Indo Aryan words are adopted in Tamil in Sangam literature they are more frequently borrowed form Prakrit forms or with Prakritic features. Surely Sanskrit and Prakrit cultures were known to some extent in Tamilanad but rather through Prakrit than through Sanskrit. Massive influence of Sanskrit in Tamil literature took place much later". [Dr. J. Filliozat on *Tamil and Sanskrit in South India*, in *Tamil Culture*, vol. IV, No. 4, Oct. 1955 quoted by Nair:1959:71]

Sanskrit gained ground because it was sonorous

Nair explains why Sanskrit could catch up:

"Now going back to the base of our theoretical structure viz. local Hinduism(Brahminism) we find that Sanskrit language spread through ritualistic practices introduced by the Brahmins in the "Gramakshetra" or village temple. Ritualistic Sanskrit was mostly poetry and it was poetry in the form of *Manthras* and *Stotras* that first caught the profane ears of the non-Brahmin temple worshipper. These *Manthras* and *Stotras* were resonant with sonorous words and phrases and so replete which imagery that when recited aloud they seldom failed to evoke strong feelings of devotion in the minds of the hearer who knew the mythology behind this majestic poetry. Here lies the beginnings of the social control of the Brahmin through a language which was reified and strengthened to suit their purposes." [Nair: 1959: 72]

Nair further explains:

"As was pointed out earlier the spread of Sanskrit began with the recital of Sanskrit poetry rich in resonant poetic forms and phrases, e.g. Vedic hymns, strotras such as that by Shankaracharya. These verses with their suggestive and powerful words were so much in contrast with the soft and liquid sounds of the non-Aryan speeches that as compared to the former, the equivalents in the latter failed to evoke any feeling in the crowd." [Nair: 1959: 74]

Hindi was retaining Sanskrit Influence

At a time, when Brahmins decided to divide the country on the basis of language at the time of fall of Buddhism, they were careful enough to maintain superiority of Sanskrit influence. As Nair quotes:

"In fact, historically also the growth of Hindi, despite its variations, has taken place in the Gangetic valley in such a way as to retain the purity of sense and meaning of Sanskrit words. This will be further seen by a study of the semantic changes that have taken places in Sanskrit words after their absorption in other regional languages. Viewed in this way, it is also clear why many orthodox Hindus are not willing to accept Hindustani as the national language because it contains a large strata of words from Persian, Arabic and Turkish which were spoken by former cultural conquerors. The adoption of Hindustani as the official language in place of Hindi would not be in keeping with the Brahmanical revival that is making itself prominently felt in India during the post-Independence period." [Nair: 1959: 75]

Trick of *trigger phrases*

Nair explains how Sanskrit has been the effective vehicle for the spread of *trigger phrases* in Indian thought. The average educated Indian, especially a Hindu, cannot easily recognise these artificial *trigger phrases* and words in his speech, as he is unconsciously habituated for centuries to use these as a matter of second nature for him. In fact without these trigger words and phrases, he cannot find the correct word or a substitute word or phrase which is free from Sanskritic influence." [Nair: 1959:76]

Spread of Sanskrit

Nair explains, in the initial period, how Sanskrit spread so rapidly and influenced the thought processes of the masses while it started only as the language of ritual.:

"...The answer is simple enough. With the growth in power of Brahmin priests in their temples there was also the growth in their importance and influence in the courts of kings and chieftains. The Dharma Shastras were incorporated in the puranas at a time (about the middle of the 4th century A.D.) when the Brahmins acquired the position of a status-group within the caste hierarchy. ... The gradual stages by which Sanskrit became powerful in the South is best described by Dr. Filliozat. [Nair: 1959: 77]

Dr. Filliozat's views are summarized below. Sanskrit words were borrowed but Tamil scholars continued the use their own grammar. Most known Sanskrit texts were *Ayurveda* and *Jotishya*, apart from Gita. Tamil saints, who were non- brahmins, used ordinary Tamil words without technical meaning, though Sanskrit ideas are alluded to. Their compositions were devotional and not philosophical. Tamil was used more till Shankara wrote on upanishadas etc. in c. 800 A.D. Thus Tamil received double dose of Sanskrit words from north and south. Tamil works of religious import were reinterpreted as Vedantic, and awarded status of Vedas. [Nair: 1959: 78]

Non-brahmin dignitaries were coopted

Tamil saint poets attained great fame at a later stage, but though men like Nammalwar were denied the status of *Kulapati* of Vaishnavas only because he was a non-brahmin, these saints were made use of to further the cause of chaturvana, by declaring them as their own. Nair explains the tendency:

"However, every time a non-Brahmin attained remarkable stature in the assimilation of Brahmanical culture and produced some work of intrinsic merit in his own language for the use of his fellowmen, the Brahmins lost no time in giving the work a Sanskritic interpretation as to disallow it an independent existence of its own and continued esteem in popular mind. It is clearly due to the insecurity in the Brahmin mind that leads them to adopt this strategy as is evident from many modern instances. In fact it is not quite a well-known fact that the orthodox Brahmins had at one time offered to Mahatma Gandhi the choice of the acceptance of Brahminhood which he characteristically refused. The fact that he was finally assassinated by a fanatic Chitpavan Brahmin of Poona is more than significant of the suppressed hostility of those caste-conscious Brahmins

all over India who could not share the enlightened views of that great soul." [Nair: 1959: 78]

Brahmanism flourished due to British rule Nair explains how the British helped spread of Brahmanism throughout India, and exclaims that the Brahmin succeeded in utilising the British as an unconscious tool for the strengthening of his social control over masses by four streams of activity by the British administration which directly contributed to the strength of all-India Hinduism(Brahminism) under Brahmin leadership. Dr. M. N. Srinivas classified them as follows.

(a)systematic reconstruction of Indian history

(b)development of mass communication media, films of mythological themes and Brahmanical control over press. To this could now be added electronic media and mythological serials.

(c)growth of movements against defects in Brahmanical religion like untouchability, child marriage etc.

(d)study of Sanskrit literature and philosophy

Nair exclaims that, thus the **Brahmin discovered his soul and saw with clear eyes the beauty and ugliness of his own handiwork in India,** and the regrouping of social forces that took place under the British regime. [Nair: 1959: 80]

Christians not influenced by the sanskritisation

Concluding, Nair mentions another weakness of Sanskrit: "And this concerns its failure to leave the psychological impress on the Christian community in India. Christianity of the real proselytising variety came to India and drew it strength only during the British occupation so that it must be considered intrinsically as the religion of a cultural and political conqueror. The conversions of Christianity were mostly from people who were outside the pale of Brahmanical Hinduism(Brahminism) so that the cultural influences of Sanskrit were not felt by these people to any extent before conversion or after it." [Nair: 1959: 81]

Sanskrit has no relevance with daily life

With rapid Sanskritisation, Nair feels, it lost relevance in daily life of people, specially the non-Brahmins:

"... The '*weltanschauung*' [i.e. outlook of world] of the South Indian (non-Brahmin) was rendered highly unreal and abstract infusion of Sanskrit words created a disjunction between the symbol and the phenomenon. It was not merely the haphazard spread of Sanskrit or its deliberate and principal use for sacerdotal purposes that brought about this mental situation but also to a large extent the esotericism that was imported in the use of the language, the word-meanings, etc. **And above all it was a leisure class (only) that used Sanskrit.** As Prof. Kosambi so aptly puts it "The language suffered from its long monopolistic association with a class that had no direct interest in technique, manual operations, trade agreements, contracts or surveys. The class did have leisure enough to write their tenuous ideas in a tortuous manner above the reach of the common herd and to unravel them from such writings. Prose virtually disappeared from high literary Sanskrit. Words that survived in literary usage took on so many supplementary meanings that a good Sanskrit text cannot be interpreted without a commentary. The glosses are often demonstrably wrong and succeed in only confusing the text which has to be restored by critical methods first developed in Europe. The older terms used in administration (e.g. in Arathashastra and Copperplate charters) were forgotten. In some cases, where obscurity was deliberately imposed (i.e. the Tantric mysticism) cult and meaning of the text vanished together. There were astounding mnenomic developments but they too contributed to the same end by over-specialization and particular jargons for every discipline". (*An Introduction to the Study of Indian History* pp.225-266) [Nair: 1959: 85]

Sanskrit has nothing to do with Computer

Some people, whose forefathers themselves were the sufferers of this language, try to take pride and seek solace in believing that Sanskrit is a good language for computer. The inventor of this myth seems to be a person, not only with perverted sense of egotism about his heritage and ignorance of his ancestral history, but also an urge to befool the gullible masses of India. The minimum expectation from such scholars would be to pause and think how a language which was not allowed to be learned by a scholar like Dr. Ambedkar can ever be considered a good language worth learning by masses. It is language of control by a few over multitude. It is a language of oppression.

It has nothing to do with computer language, which is a binary language, a language of 1s and 0s, a language of ON and OFF. After all a computer is nothing but a collection of millions of fast acting switches. It is by

creating computer codes like EBCDIC and ASCII, various alphabets can be assigned numbers, and these numbers representing alphabets are converted into binary for computer processing. Any language on the earth is equally good or equally bad for the computer purpose. Those who claim that Sanskrit is a useful language for computer have got a cruel and malevolent intention of projecting the misdeeds of their forefathers. A scholar in them is dead, only a caste superiority prejudice is seen in their such statements.

Most unfortunate thing is that so called scholars from among the sufferers of tyranny of this language, seem to have a liking of this language through misconceived ideas about it. Their multiple degrees are worth throwing away in a dust bin. Just by becoming learned in Sanskrit does not qualify anybody to receive respect, you have to be born. Read *Dasbodh* of Ramdas, if you have doubts.

The language which ruined this country, is respected by these so called scholars. It was Ramdas himself, a Brahmanical social activist of 17th century, who coined a phrase for such people in Marathi- "*padhat murkh*", the nearest English rendering of it should be a "learned fool".

What did the propagators of this language give to the people of this country apart from disintegration and slavery of centuries. What kind of society they have produced? A society full of discriminations where more than half of people are unfit even for a touch, another one third driven to forests and another group whose occupation is crime, a society where prostitution is practiced in the name of God and religion, a society where suicide is sacrosanct, a society where uttering obscene abuses is a part of religion, a society where daughters are murdered immediately after birth, a society where widows are burnt on the funeral pyre of their husbands, a society where a vast section of people are deprived from holding any property, holding any arms, getting any education, a society where taking a marriage procession on a public road brings atrocities, murder, rape and arson, a society where nearly the whole country uses the public roads as a toilet. And one expects these very people the sufferers of this extreme exploitation to regard this language as holy and sacrosanct. One only has to remember the words of Theludesus: It may be your interest to be our masters, how can it be ours to be your slaves. Still this is probably the only country in the world where the slaves are enjoying their slavery and prisoners guard the prison gates and display their fetters as ornaments.

There are people who try to propagate that the Sanskrit language is the original language which was gifted by God (to Brahmins of India). Despite all other languages in the world, to consider one particular language as "god given" is the worst form of imprudence and arrogance, to say the least; and is not only derogatory to the inventor of the idea, but also marks the god with partiality to a caste.

Importance of Pali

After obtaining Buddhahood, the Buddha preached orally for the rest of His life of 45 years, and these preachings were learned by heart by the disciples. They were compiled into *Tripitakas* in various *sangitis*, the first being 3 months after *Mahaparinirvana*, second 100 years later, third in the reign of Ashoka, after which Bhikkus were sent to various places. Mahinda and Sanghmitra went to Simhala. All these years, all the preachings were preserved by oral tradition. It was after this that they were reduced in writings, in Simhala during the reign of Vattagamini (29 B.C.). This was fourth sangiti. The Buddha did not insist for any particular language, and everybody learned them in their own language. As a matter of fact, ***Tripitaka* was preserved in many languages.** According to one famous Tibetan tradition, the scriptures of Sarvasti-vadis' are in Sanskrit, those of Mahasanghikas in Prakrit, those of Mahasammaitis in Apbhramsha and those of Sthaviras in Paishachi. **Today we know the word Pali as a name of language. It contains whole of Tripitaka and Anupitaka of Thervada. Originally, this word meant Original Teachings of the Buddha or Tripitaka. Later it denoted the language of them. Thus the use of term Pali as a name of language is rather new, and more in vogue since 19th century.** The language, we call today Pali is actually known traditionally as Magadhi. It is well known that the Buddha had refused permission to use Sanskrit as the vehicle of teachings, and declared it as a minor crime. [Rahul Sankrutyayana: 1992: 5]

Dr. Bhagchandra Jain also mentions that, Pali literature is rendered in writing in Srilanka in First Century B.C., in the reign of Vattagamini. Before that it was prevalent by oral recitation. This is the reason why we find the compilation of many references could not be made in chronological order in Pali literature. Some references are twisted to suit them, some are omitted and some are added. Even then, the available material is historically and culturally important. The valuation from this angle is still not done. [Jain: 1971: 4]

The study of Aryan languages in the middle age is complete only after scientific study of Pali Language. Pali has affected not only the modern Indian Languages but it has enough contribution in the development of modern languages in countries like Sinhala, Burma, Thailand, China, Japan, Tibet, Magnolia etc. and Pali literature has proved to be a greatest help in fixing the dates of ancient history. [Jain: 1971: 6] L. M. Joshi also describes the influence of Buddhist language and script as follows:

"... Indian paleography and epigraphy owe a great deal to the original and pioneer inspiration of Buddhism and its lithic records. The earliest historical inscriptions of India are the Buddhist inscriptions. The *dhammalipi* of Ashoka became the mother of all subsequent varieties of Brahmi and its derivative Indian scripts." [L. M. Joshi, *Aspects of Buddhism in Indian History*, p.32]

Study of Sanskrit

Rigveda is said to be the most ancient book. Study of language started in west after William Jones translated *Shakuntalam* into English. In India, modern study of languages started after Ramkrishna Bhandarkar opined through "Wilson philological lectures" that Sanskrit is the original language and all the Indian as well as foreign languages originated from it. [Mishra, VS 2023: 351] Greek Helenic language also has some similarities with Sanskrit. ["Vangmay Vimarsha" by Pundit Vishwanath Prasad Mishra, Hindi Sahitya Kutir, Varanasi - 1, v.samvat 2023, p.358]

Some relate the Dravidian languages with Australian languages. After Mohonjodaro excavation, now they are being related with Sumerian languages. [Mishra, p.355] Word *"mund"* is used in Vayu Purana and in Mahabharata it is used for a caste. The word "*shabar*" is still ancient, which is found in *Ateriya Brahman*. Their language is called *Munda, Kol,* or *Shabar*. There is a great influence of these languages over several Indian languages, various examples are quoted by the author of this influence on Bihari, Gujarathi and Madhyapradesh language. [Mishra, p. 363]

Dravidian languages

Kumaril Bhatt made only two divisions Dravida and Andhra, But the modern scholars have made following classification of Dravidian languages:

1. Dravida- with (a) Tamil (b) Kannada (c) Tulu (d) Kodagu (e) Tod

2. Andhra- (a) Telugu

3. Central- with (a) Gondi (b) Kurukha (c) Kui (d) Kolami

Tamil has two forms. A poetic language called *"shen"*, the other is called *"kodun"*, Malayalam is supposed to be elder daughter of Tamil. Influence of Sanskrit is less on Tamil contrarily Malayalam has great influence. [Mishra, p.365]

Languages of Indian Branch

There are two views. The scholars of ancient school believe that original language is Sanskrit, form which all Aryan languages originated, Prakrit from Sanskrit, Apbhransha from Prakrit and regional languages from Apbhransha. New linguistic scholars believe that Vedic Sanskrit itself originated from some original Aryan language. On one side Vedic language, modified or Sanskrit was used and on the other hand, unmodified or Prakrit was being used as a language of common speech. Both these originated from some common root. Sanskrit, the spoken language of elite (shistas - meaning Brahmins), and Prakrit, the spoken language of the masses are sisters of each other. That Prakrit is termed by them as *"Aadim Prakrit"* meaning original Prakrit. From this evolved all other Prakrit languages. Some people believe that, from original Prakrit the classical Sanskrit, i.e Sanskrit of literature, evolved. But some believe that classical Sanskrit evolved from Vedic Sanskrit through stages of Brahmanas, Upanishadas, Kavyas, and Gathas. The divisions of Indian languages made in *"pratisakhyas"* are considered by them as regional forms of the original Prakrit - *"Oudichya"* (Northern), *"Pratichya"* (western), *"Dakshinatya"* (southern) *"Madhya Deshiya" (bichali)* and *"Prachya"* (eastern). Late Dr. Bhandarkar believed in Evolution of Prakrit from Sanskrit. He thought Classical and Vedic Sanskrit together as the original source of Prakrits. But scholars have discarded this old view and they now believe Original Prakrit as the source. [Mishra: Vikram Samat 2023: 371]

Prakrit

Prakrit can be divided into three stages if we consider *Apbhransha* as a late Prakrit. There were three periods in its evolution. They are ancient, middle are late Prakrit. [Mishra, p.376] Why it is called Prakrit? 1. Prakriti means nature, so Prakrit a language of more people. 2. Comparing Sanskrit and Prakrit, Sanskrit is refined and Prakrit is unrefined. 3. Jains

have defined Prakrit as the most ancient language. They divide the word into 'Prak' and 'krit', and they believe all other languages originated from Prakrit (Ardhamagadhi).

Some people term all the languages placed under ancient Prakrit as Pali, but we find there are many ancient Prakrits other than Pali. Edicts of Ashoka, Hinayani Tripitakas, Mahavamsha, Jatakas etc., ancient Jain Sutras, and Prakrits of ancient dramas are grouped under this language. [Mishra, p.377]

The language of Ashoka's edicts and Hinayana Scriptures has come to be known as Pali. The language of scriptures is considered by Buddhists as "Magadhi". [Mishra, p.377]

Ashoka Edicts

The language of Ashoka's Edicts differs in different areas. At least two different types can be discerned. As the Buddha was from Magadha, and he preached in people's language, it should be Magadhi, but after due consideration, it seems that it was not Magadhi but general Prakrit, because later Buddhist scriptures do not show the traits seen in Magadhi Prakrit. [Mishra, p.377] Therefore, His preachings were in *"Pacchahi"* language from which was originated *Shouriseni Prakrit* of the middle lands and *Maharashtri Prakrit* of the whole country. Ashoka also considered it the main language. The language of Jain sutras is considered *Ardha Magadhi*, which should mean that it has got traits of both Shourseni and Magadhi thus it is clear that the language of middle country was the basis of evolution of Prakrit. [Mishra, p.378]

Middle Prakrit consists of Maharashtri Prakrit, Prakrit used in dramas, Prakrit of later Jain scriptures and Paishyachi i.e language of Brihat Katha.

Maharashtri had more respect among the Prakrits. The Maharashtri name could be because of region like Shourseni or Magadhi but, it should be considered as *Maha* as vast and Maharashtri means language of the greater part of the country as becomes clear from a verse of Dandin. [Mishra, p.379]

Apabhransha :Apbhramsha originated from Prakrit. Grammarians consider two forms of it, *"Nagar"* and *"Brachad"*. Sindhi evolved from Brached and Gujarathi, Rajasthani, Braji etc. evolved from Nagar. There are two types according to time. Early and late. *Avahatha* can be

considered a late type. The Apbhramsha more nearer to modern regional languages can be placed in late type of Apbhramsha. [Mishra, p.382]

Modern Regional Languages of India :They originated after Apbhramsha. It can not be said definitely when the poetry in regional languages started. But looking at the late Apbhramsha, it is clear that the words of modern regional languages are seen in them. Therefore, **the time of the origin of regional languages must be placed in Tenth or Eleventh centuries of Vikram Era.** [Mishra, p.383]

Hindi

Hindi was the first regional language to originate. Its ancient roots are in Shourseni and also Magadhi or Ardha Magadhi. Name Hindi originated from Hindu. Others do not agree with this. Hindu is a name given by Muslims.

There are four types, Khadiboli, Rekhata, Nagari, and high Hindi. [Mishra, p.389] Urdu evolved from language soldiers spoke in the market, and thus it is basically hindi only. [Mishra, p.391] After Britishers came Hindi got mixed with words from all languages and was called "Hindusthani". [Mishra, p.393]

Classification of Hindi

1. Western (paschimi) (a) Khadi boli -
(i) Urdu - of three types of Northern (Uttari) - Rekhati; Dehalvi; and Lakhanavi. And one Southern (Dakhani)
(ii) Mixed
(iii)High Hindi (uccha hindi)
(b)Bangaru
(c) Central (Madyavarti) with
(i) Braji (ii) Kanauji and (iii) Bundeli

2. Eastern (Purvi) : - (a) Avadhi - with (i) Western (Pashimi) and (ii) Eastern (Purvi) (b) Bagheli (c) Chattisgadhi

Scripts of India

Only two scripts were in vogue at the time of Ashoka, Brahmi and Kharoshti. On the basis of available Brahmi inscriptions, the time of Brahmi script is considered to be from 500 B.C. to 350 A.D. Two styles were visible in Brahmi in 4th century A.D. which are called Northern and

Southern. The scripts evolved from Northern are, Gupta, Kutil, Nagari, Sharda and Bangala, and from Southern are Western, Madhya Pradeshi, Telugu Kannad, Grantha, Kalinga and Tamil. [Mishra, p.454]

Script of Gupta kings is termed as "Gupta", from which evolved in sixth to nineth century, a script called "Kutil". From tenth century onwards, we find traces of "Nagari" in North India. In South, it was called "Nanda Nagari" and appeared around 8th century. From Nagari evolved the Bangala, Kaithi, Gujarathi, Marathi languages. Sharda of Kashmir evolved from Kutil. From Sharada evolved, Takkari and Gurumukhi. From early Bangala script originated, present Bangala, Maithili and Udiya. [Mishra, p.454]

Out of Southern Styles, script found in Kathiyavad, Gujarath, Nashik, Khandesh, Satara etc. is termed Western. That found in Madhya Pradesh, North Hyderabad and Bundelkhand is called Madhya Pradeshi, and Telgu-Kannad script was precursor of present Telgu and Kannad scripts. A different script called "Grantha" was being used to write Sanskrit works, from it evolved Malayalam and Tulu. Kalinga script was in Kalinga. [Mishra, p.455]

About origin of word Nagari, there are different views. One view is it was Urban (meaning Nagari) script. Some connect it with Nagar Brahmins. There are others who consider that, previous to image worship, devas were worshiped in the form of Yantras, the symbols of which were called "Devnagar" giving the name to the script. [Mishra, p.455]

How India got divided into numerous linguistic areas

Above is the picture of diversity of languages and scripts in India - past and present. How India, which, during Buddhist period, had only one main language and one or two main scripts, got divided into various groups with their intrinsic rivalries? This is the main problem, which nobody bothers to refer to. After the fall of Buddhism, Brahmanism not only divided the people into numerous castes with graded inequality and numerous tiny dynasties with rivalries due to sense of high and low, but also divided the whole country into small segments. It taught that each kingdom, though small, is a different country. The result was that the feeling of oneness was never present among the Hindus. There never arose a feeling on one India among them. In scriptures, we find definitions of 'foreign' lands at many places. They denote the mischief caused. [Surendra Kumar Adnyat - Sarita Mukta Reprint vol. 7, p. 24]

Brahspati says that if there is a big river or a big mountain in between, or if the language differs, then the countries on either side should be treated as foreign lands of each other. Some say after 60 yojanas, new country starts, some say 40 and some say 30 yojanas. (One yojana equals 8 miles). Brahaspati mentions another opinion using the word '*videsh*' in place of '*deshantara*', that the videsh is that where one can not get messages within one day. [Surendra Kumar Adnyat - Sarita Mukta Reprint vol. 7, p. 24]

Dharmasindhu defines '*deshantara*' or '*videsh*' on the basis of caste. For a brahmin distance of 20 *yojanas* from his residence, is 'deshantara', for ksatriya it is 24 yojanas, for a vaishya it is 30 yojanas and for a sudra it is 60 yojanas. If a big mountain or river comes in way or if there is difference of language, then it is a different country, as said by some people. It only means, in such an event, even though the distance is less than 20, 24, 30 or 60 yojanas, even then it is 'deshantara' for brahmins, ksatriyas, vaishyas and sudras respectively. [Surendra Kumar Adnyat - Sarita Mukta Reprint vol. 7, p. 24]

Thus as per scriptures, at the most 480 miles is the limit of your country, every thing beyond is a foreign land. Even today, we use the word 'pardeshi' meaning a foreigner for a resident of a town, some distance away. When the sastras declare all areas except in immediate vicinity are alien lands, how can one expect the rajas and subjects consider other fellow Indians as their own in this vast land.

***Kalivarjya* was the method of control**

We have already discussed how the *kalivarj* was the method of Brahmins to tackle with the Buddhist influence over the masses and to impose their supremacy. They changed their laws without actually condemning them, something like present day rulers brought in frank Capitalism without removing the words Socialism from Indian Constitution. All laws and rules, were amended including Civil, Criminal, Revenue and Personal laws of Marriage, Adoption etc. It is not properly realized by the masses, that King was not the Law maker; he had no legislative powers, contrary to the popular belief. He was only the executive head and had a responsibility to implement the laws made by the Brahmins. At the most he could only legislate on revenue matters, that too, as per the rules already laid down. He had some judicial powers, but that too, he could not pass judgment against the law given by the Brahmins.

Who suffered in Kalivarjya

In Kalivarjya, main law was against sea voyage. That is how the sea worthy races of Pallava and Chola countries suffered. All the trade that was being conducted through the sea stopped. Who suffered? Not the Brahmins, surely. It will be clear, if we take a look at the products of export. Most of the products of export were based on the agriculture, horticulture, animal husbandry and forest economy. Even the textile industry which had reached a high acclaim in foreign lands, was based on cotton, silk and wool. All these occupations were in the hands of working classes, who were all doomed to be shudras. All these industries suffered. All these castes in the village economy suffered. All these occupational groups, which were prosperous during the Buddhist rule, were degraded into castes, due to rigid caste rules imposed.

The mobility of the professions was stopped. *Telis*, who extracted oil from oil seeds, *Malis*, who grew the vegetables, the *Dhangars*, who reared the goats and lambs, *Sutars*, who made and repaired the farmers' implements, *Kumar*, who suppled earthen pots to villagers and *Mahars* and *Mangs* who protected the villages from strangers, all were segregated. All these professions became hereditary and social intercourse among them stopped. **Not only this caused multiplicity of castes, and regional variations in languages but also a different language for each of the various castes.** This ultimately lead to present situation of confusion, distrust and hostility among the people destroying social fabric of country, for which we have only to thank the fall of Buddhism and rise of Brahmanism.

Chapter 15

CONCLUSION To summarize

Depicting Buddha as Hindu by RSS, specially to the international community, and pretending to respect Him, is a stategy to hoodwink the mases, as was done about Ambedkar. The process started long time back by declaring Buddha as an avatara of god in some times around eighth century and finalised till 12th century. Manohar Joshi, the then Chief Minister of Maharashtra, writing in the Introduction of Dr. Ambedkar's W&S vol. 16, (1998) does mention Buddha as tenth incarnation of God, knowingly that the Buddhists all over the world do not believe in God, let alone its incarnations. At the same time, an average Brahmin takes a great pride that Buddhism was driven away from this land by Adi- Sankara. They ignore that a non-existent religion can not die.

Declaring the Buddha as ninth *avatara* of Vishnu, by the Brahmanic Puranas, was meant to cause confusion in the minds of people with the result that Buddhism came to be treated as a "heretical" and "aesthetic" branch of Brahmanism. The modern scholars like Kane, Radhakrishnan, Swami Vivekanand and Tilak, have pushed this confusion further back to the time of origin of Buddhism, by saying that Upanishadas are the origin of Buddhist thought, thus claiming both that Buddhism was just a refined "Hinduism(Brahminism)", and also claiming with pride that Buddhism was driven away by the Brahmanas and it has died down,

As a non-existent tradition or way of life can not die, and as the decline of Buddhism in India is a historical fact, the theory of its origin as a "reformed" Brahmanism is false. If Buddhism was a sect of "Hinduism(Brahminism)", then one may well ask the proud supporters of Shankaracharya, what was that religion which was "driven out by Adi Sankara", as they claim? Was it also Hinduism(Brahminism)? This proves that Buddhism is not a sect of Hinduism(Brahminism), which was nonexistant till Muslim conquest.

Buddhism was the national Religion of India

Buddhism was the first organized religion in the modern sense of the term "religion". It succeeded in driving out the Brahman religion of sacrifices, but gradually succumbed to the influences of the religion of masses, who had by then, set up Buddha's images and started temple worship. The fact that at one time Buddhism was the national religion of India and was followed by

the majority of population, is almost ignored. There is a feeling in the minds of many, that India is and was a Hindu country having always had a majority of Hindus. This again is a misconception. In historical times the population of India never had majority of Hindus. Swami Vivekananda, estimated Buddhists to be two thirds of population [L.M.Joshi: 1977: 358] and Dr. Ambedkar says Buddhist were in majority. [W&S, 7, 345] Then there were Jains and Veerashaivas and Tribal religions in addition to Muslims, Sikhs and Christians coming in the later times. Brahmins had lost all the respect of masses as well as princely rulers. They were smarting under this defeat. [Untouchables, W&S vol.7, p.346] They did everything in their power to finish off Buddhism and after Muslim invasion, succeeded in it.

Buddhism was the national religion of India, not only because the Buddha was an Indian, but because it was the source and inspiration of the national awakening of Indian empires and for the first time, united India in a common cultural synthesis and organization and because unlike Brahmanism, which was the religion of the privileged classes, Buddhism was the first religion of the common people, not forced on them, but accepted by their free will and pleasure; and because Buddhism caused progress in science and art, literature and religion, commerce and industry, internal progress and international reputation; and lastly, because no other religion has till this day been able to make India a great nation as Buddhism did. [Swami Dharmatirtha, p. 76]

Brahmins usurped Buddhism

Brahmans became the leaders of Buddhism because of their learning, and first disfigured it thoroughly with ritualism and images, and then destroyed its separate organization of monasteries and monks with the help of the foreign masters who came into power. But the Buddhism of Harsha and Nagarjuna did not disappear, it formed the nucleus of the later Hinduism(Brahminism), superadded with horrors of caste. **To become the sole leaders of the country and to enforce their system of castes, has always been the prime motive of Brahmanism, and if Buddhist order of monks and monasteries had survived, the Brahmins could not have achieved this goal. So they completely destroyed the external institution of Buddhism, the monks and monasteries. Brahmins became the undisputed leaders, and a new popular religion, Hinduism(Brahminism), emerged with important aspect of caste,** as Dharmatitha observed:

"... Caste is an entirely independent social order which was neither in the ancient Aryan religion nor in primitive Indian religion nor in Buddhism. **It is the unique contribution of the Brahman priests, and none else ever wanted it, until the country lost its national religion and political freedom, and the Brahmans succeeded in imposing the system upon the people almost at the point of the bayonet with of alien masters.** [Swami Dharmatirtha, p. 110]

Brahmanism does not mean Brahmins alone

As the British Imperialism does not mean the British people and symbolizes a vast system and has numerous votaries among Indians also, Brahmanism, similarly, does not signify the Brahmins exclusively, but an ancient order of things of which the Brahmins are the leaders and champions. It stands for the aggregate of ideals, institutions and past history of the socio-religious constitution of the Hindu society. We have to serve the welfare of the entire nation and not the sentiment of separate castes, though Brahmans, or Kshatriyas or others must accept a larger share of the blame for the disaster which has befallen us all. We have to understand that it is the pernicious system which is throttling us all equally, and is the subject of our criticism. A prominent thinker of Maharashtra, Raosaheb Kasbe, has elaborated the subject by saying that, Brahmins are fortunte that, "Brahmin" is a name of Caste as well as of a "Varna", thereby implying Class, this status being bestowed upon them by Smritis. As a class and as a power structure, Brahmins have developed vested interests. Dalit writers divide the history as Brahmin Vs. non- Brahmin, instead of Vedic Vs. non-Vedic, and **when the words having Brahmin as one of their components are used by them to criticise these vested interests, the meaning implied is against the power structure and not agaist the caste. If this is a blameworthy mistake, the mistake is committed by the authors of Smritis, specially "Yama smriti", and they and the later authors desrve the blame.** [Kasbe Raosaheb, *"hindu muslim prashna aani sawarkara cha hindu rastravaad"*, (marathi) Sugawa Publ. 1994, p.242 ff.]

Causes of fall of Buddhism

We saw M. M. Kane's views and those of other scholars. Caliber of Vajrayani Buddhists was not the cause, neither was the Tantric practices. Buddhist Siddhas were the forerunners of Bhakti cult, which now Hindus claim to be theirs. In this respect Brahmin books must not be relied upon.

Techniques of imposing slavery over the population by the Brahmins were studied. In present times the struggle is amongs the followers of Phule, Shahu, Ambedkar Versus those of Tilak Gandhi Golwalkar. We saw the Brahmanic tendency to find faults with Buddhism for country's ills, like Sawarkar in his "saha soneri pane" blaming Buddhist *Ahimsa* and ignorng the real reason being *Chaturvarna*.

Position of women in ancient india has been studied in detail in Pre-Vedic and Vedic times and Buddhist Doctrines and Laws about them contrasted and Manu's role in their degradation stressed. This continued in Rajput and in middle ages in pre-British times, and got worst during Peshawa rule.

Even today Buddhism is the national Religion of India

We saw how Buddhism was the national religion of India and that it is flourishing even now in the garb of Hinduism(Brahminism) with superadded *Chaturvarna*. We saw Buddhism is not a sect of Hinduism(Brahminism), irrespective of false propaganda of RSS. As Dr. Tulsiram, Associate Proffesor, School of International Studies, JNU and editor of Hindi monthly 'Vishwa Ashvaghosah', observes the Vishwa Hindu Parishad, has organised a number of "World Hindu Buddhist Conferences", at Haridwar, Modi Puram, Sarnath, Rajgir, Buddha Gaya, and Lumbini. At these conferences, it is falsely claimed that since Buddhism is an essential part of Hinduism(Brahminism), those who want to embrace Buddhism should embrace Hinduism(Brahminism) directly. Also the text books are manipulated e.g. in a class IX book, the Sangha Parivar's Government in Gujrath has inserted that "the caste system is the greatest gift of Aryans to humankind." One of the reasons of reasserting Sankrit is preservation of caste. He observes:

"... The religion based on caste system has annihilated millions of Dalits over the centuries. About three million Dalit women have been raped and around one million Dalits killed from the time of Independence. This is 25 times more than number of soldiers killed during the wars fought after independence. That is why Dalits do not need Aryan culture or Hindu Dharma based on caste any more. ..." [Dr. Tulsiram, "The Pioneer", 30 Jan. 2000]

Two Orphans of Humanity

Jesus and Buddha were both ignored in their own countries and thus two

Orphans in the world of Nations as Swami Dharma Tirtha has compared condition of Indians with Jews. Only that presently, the Jews have progressed, but we did not. Vedantists' claim that Vedanta alone can save the world and humanity has proved false and let alone saving the world, Hindus did not cultivated any superior virtues and ideals, and deny justice and humanity to their own kith and kin. Failure of Socialist Reformers was because they are steeped in the culture of caste and the religion of deception and exploitation. Same is the condition of the so called Nationalists, who only cultivated regionalism and language struggle and a good number of our Socialists and Nationalists turned out to be rank Capitalists and fanatical Communalists. Of many revolutions against Brahmanism, only work of Guru Govind Singh and Sikhism seems to have survived, at least to some extent, being influenced by saints like Kabir and Nanak, all under spirit of Buddhism.

Hindus became Hindus by Conversion

The derogatory sense of the word "Hindu" is forgotten, it is also forgotten that Brahmins did not like to be called as Hindus, not a long time back and that Hindus became Hindus by a sort of mass conversion or mass classification by the Muhammadans, and the various castes acquired their status by a similar process of mass classification behind their backs by the Brahman first and lastly by the British Government by laws made for them. We saw that Hinduism(Brahminism) is not a religion in the sense in which Buddhism Muhammadanism and Christianity are. It is a loose conglomeration of castes, which is described by one author as a "grocery shop", where the comodity called "grocery" is not sold. **Therefore, all those who are not Muhammadans or Christians are treated as Hindus, where all types of worship is allowed, as long as Brahin supremacy is maintained.** Even for these Christians and Mohamedans, Brahmins have plans to incorporate in Hinduism(Brahminism) and terms like "Mohemadi Hindus" are already coined for them, and full preparations are going on for its implementation. Also plans are afoot to create new 'Swastika' temples for such "purified" Christians. **Thus the vagueness of Hinduism(Brahminism) is a virtue for them, and language of Vedanta is the garb of camaflouge of equality, which help in the desire of Brahmin elites to govern the OBCs.** Arrogance of Brahmins, who rule Hindus, did not change since the times of Abbe Dobois, neither did their attitude towards women.

Suggestions for nation building

The constructive thoughts and efforts and guiding as to what must be done as advised by Swamiji are summerised in the ability to evolve new ideals and institutions to embody the spirit of the collective life and will and avoid an obstinate clinging to mere existence and past glories. India had been suffering under the two imperialisms, Brahmanical and British placed one above the other, and three tests of Hindu Nationalism should be (1) Opposition to caste, (2) opposition to priestcraft and idolatry, and (3) Inter-religious tolerance and fraternisation. It must be realised that more nationalism persisted in the past before the British arrived, and there was more fellow feeling in teachings of saints, inspired by Buddhism.

Modus operandi of Brahmins to enslave Hindus

That the *kalivarjya* was the method of brahmins to tackle the Buddhist influence over the masses and impose their supremacy. All laws and rules, were amended including Civil, Criminal, Revenue and Personal laws, without actually condemning them. Who suffered in Kalivarjya were the OBCs due to failure of export of their productions. These are the masses of which Indian society is made of, and it is the need of the day to educate them. The process of emancipation of masses was started by Mahatma Phule, strengthened by Shahu, and put in Indian Constitution by Dr. Ambedkar. Now it is the duty of masses to protect the Constitution, if they want to protect themselves from oncoming Brahmanic tyranny.

Decline and fall of Buddhism

Techniques in causing decline and fall of buddhism, the Caliber of Vajrayani Buddhists, the methods of Brahmanic Conquest by peaceful means, the domestic and sexual invasion in Kerala are discussed, and the role of Shankara explained. Various techniques of Brahmanic controls, the difference between Local and Regional Brahmanism the admission of kings to Varna System, the extension of Varna system, the Extension of Sanskritic deities, the creation and developement of ceremonial and the Sanskritisation of names of places discussed and the social self of Brahmin explained. It was seen how Buddha's Sangha was captured by Brahmins, and how Brahmins destroyed Buddhism from outside also and how Kautilya checked growth of Buddhism and how Buddhism tried to thwart attempts of Brahmanism and how Brahmanism crushed Nationalism.

Foreign invasions

The foreigners like Shakas, Pahlavas Hunas etc. were assimilated by Buddhist ideals and not the Brahmanic, and the Hindu Muslim Conflict would not have been there if Buddhism was alive at the time of Muslim invasion. We saw the Brahmins had comunications links with foreign forces and that they obtained foreign help to topple kings unwanted for them.

About the conditions at the time of arrival of Europeans, Raja Sekhar Vundru, IAS, former JNU student writes:

"Vasco da Gama landed in 1498 in India, a veritable social hell for the dalits. Dalits feeding on carcasses, lurking like animals in the day with a status worse than an animal and conditions of life worse than a million genocides of a Hitler. The greatness of Dalits lies in their confidence to accept the ultra sub-human existence and breed dasyus, menials, slave, asuras, chandalas and untouchables: unparalleled and unrecorded in the history of world civilizations." [Raja Sekhar Vundru, "The Pioneer", Dalit Millennium Issue, 30 Jan. 2000]

How Hindus enjoyed Brahmanic slavery?

The evils of Hindu caste system are well known. The theory of *karma* castrated the society and deprived all the masses from the motivation to revolt against the domination and atrocities of the priestly class, making all the Hindus the slaves of Brahmins. We know that Rigvedic Society had only three Varnas. The fourth varna, i.e. of Shudras was added by "*purusha-sukta*", late in Buddhist times and was a planned to destroy the egalatarian Buddhist society, to stop Kshatriya revolt against Brahmins and to stop the flow of Shudras towards Buddha's Dhamma.

We discussed the sexual behaviour of Aryans and how the ancient Aryan society did not have the marriage institution as we believe it today, or rather had no marriage institution at all. The barbarous Aryan society considered no relationship like brother- sister, father-daughter. Rajwade has explained how the priests had to satisfy the sexual demand of any woman approaching them at the time of *yajnyas*, then and there in open ground, in presence of Vedic fire. The Buddha fought against this and included vow to abstain from *mithyachara*, i.e. improper behaviour in sexual matters, among the five *shilas*.

Conversion from three varna society to four varna society was a great revolution in Aryan society, and entry of shudras into Chaturvana system, transformed savage society to rural one, claims Rajwade. But the Buddha discarded Varna System, where Shudras were made the beasts of burden with all the forced labour duties and no rights. Buddhists had no caste and Ashokan Society was integrated and that caste revived on the decay of Buddhism and emergence of Shaivism and Vaishnavism around 8th century A.D.

The productive castes suffered in Kalivarjya, one of the means adopted by Brahmins to dominate non-brahmins. The national Religion was destroyed by Caste System and Caste hierarchy with Brahmins having vested interests. They grew most powerful with the duty of kings being enjoined to worship Brahmins, whose arrogance was not an empty claim and Brahmins ruled over masses also not only the kings. Free Lands and houses were given to them, with no taxes and no fear of punishments. Secular powers were also exercised by Brahmins and Brahman Sabhas had power over all castes. Dharma Sastras were recasted in Muslim Rule and laws amended to establish Brahmin supremacy. Means employed by Brahmins to enslave Hindus included Punishments and Ordeals on Caste basis, and false philosophies created to support immoral acts to distort the religion. Buddhism had tried to save masses from Brahmanic slavery but in vain. We discussed how Vijaynagar Empire was a seat of exploitation of masses and Brahmanism was punished for the crimes.

Scheduled Tribes (aadivaasi)

Fall of Buddhism saw the rise of untouchables, the so called criminal tribes and Aadivaasis. Their problems are discussed, explaining differences between Castes and Tribes and origins of various names. Their history is traced from Prehistoric Period and it is explained that they are not remenents of Neolithic Age but are post Buddhistic. We saw how Indus Valley civilization did not belong to Aryans, how India was land of Naagas and its language Tamil, and how Vratyas were Naagas. We saw history of the Sisunaaga Dynasty, that Naaga worship is non-Vedic and Naagas were Buddhists. There was a casteless society among the Naaga culture, Naagas having their Republics. We saw the denegration of Naagas in Mahabharata, which opens with a curse on Naagas. We discussed Naaga Rajas in Kashmir and Rise of Buddhism there with Ahimsa of Buddha, and studied Serpent worship during Mauryan Dynasty, the times of Naagaarjuna

and Kanishka, the Buddhist Sculptures and that Ayrans created writings, whereas Naagas created structures. We studied importance of Tribal Population in Sanchi and Amaravati Stupas and antiquity of Naaga clans.

Other effects of Fall of Buddhism

We saw other efects of Caste culture were deprivation of Education and spread of illiteracy and how fall of Buddhism directly affected the multitudes of population, who were denied education. How Gurukul system was detrimental to the interests of masses is explained and how a most educated country, where foreign scholars were coming to take higher education in Indian Universities, became the most illiterate country of the world due to fall of Buddhism is explained.

We saw how position of women detoriated and ultimately reached to the stage of burning of widows. We saw that Rajput Age was Dark Age of India and how Brahmins created Rajputs to get hold over the population, and how it caused the degradation and fall of Indian masses.

Kulin system of Bengal: How this was created to increase the population who would be willing to accept the supremacy of Brahmins and all the ill effects of this System is explained.

Sambandham System of Kerala: How Brahmins managed to gain control over the Buddhist Nayars by this method of "Cultural fertilization" and how it destroyed the cultural fabric of old Kerala society is discussed.

Devadasis: A system of Religious prostitution is discussed. It was put forward by the present author, for the first time, that Devadasis were degraded Buddhist nuns, in his book in 1991, "Tirupati Balaji was a Buddhist Shrine". The subject is discussed more fully here.

Fall of Science: How Science was on zenith in Buddhist India and how Brahmins purposefully caused its fall to uphold their own supremacy after the fall of Buddhism.

Kashmir Problem: How a Buddhist country of Kashmir became Mohammedan country, thereby leading to all the present problems is discussed.

Language Problem: How a country, which speaking one language and one

or two scripts during the Buddhist period was divided into a country of multiple languages and scripts is discussed.

The Remedies

The reason why need to know the history is to guide us in future. If that purpose is not served, it has no meaning. The rulers of the society know it. Therefore, those who like that the oppressors should keep on oppressing and sufferers should go on suffering, never wish that the masses should know the real history. They present only those aspects of history which suits them, even distorting the facts. To find the cure, one has to know and understand the cause of ailments. If the interpretation of the history is on proper lines, the remedies would be correct. There is no doubt that now all realize that the real cause of all the ills of this country has been its religion. If this is realized, the ills can be cured and Indian masses can see the bright future. We narrate the views of some of the prominent thinkers.

Views of A. H. Salunkhe

In key note address at the recent "Bahujan Conference" at Nagpur by A. H. Salunkhe, a prominent OBC thinker and writer, expressed his views on the future course of action to be taken by OBCs. He stressed the importance of realizing the principle that OBCs and the dalits are co-sufferers. They should make it a point that they will neither tolerate the injustice done by others, nor would commit injustice against others. Vedic culture came into being after the destruction of Indus Culture. Among those who opposed Vedic culture, prominent was the Buddha and his movement was much more powerful than that of Phule, Shahu and Ambedkar. ['*Prabuddha Bharat*', 30.4.2000]

Amartya Sen got the Nobel Prize, Salunkhe said, but did not get enough publicity in Indian media, not even as much as the Beauty Contests did. The reason was that while discussing the Asian cultural history, Sen pointed out that the main reason why education did not reach the grass root levels in India was that machinery of education remained in the hands of fistful of priests, and that as contrasted against this, education reached the people at bottom levels of society in the other neighbouring nations like Ceylon and others, because they were following Buddhism. The Bahujans must realize that a person who declares these facts would not get any appreciation from the established society here. ['*Prabuddha Bharat*', 30.4.2000]

Amartya Sen, when questioned by journalists about his preceptor and the father of his ideals on Welfare State, had acknowledged the Buddha as his *'guru'* and Ashoka as his ideal, a fact which never appeared in any Brahmanical media. [Speech by P. S. Changole at Aurangabad, '*Prabuddha Bharat*', 30.4.2000]

Salunkhe explained how **Indus Culture was followed by Vedic onslaught, how Buddhism was followed by Counter-revolution by Manu, how Saints and Shivaji was followed by Peshawai and now how after the revolution of Phule, Shahu and Ambedkar we are faced with danger of destruction of this system by Brahmanic counter- revolution by the R.S.S.** If we wish to avert this calamity the Bahujans and Dalits must sort out the points of conflicts and unite. ['*Prabuddha Bharat*', 30.4.2000]

Salunkhe urged the OBCs to discard Wamana as an incarnation, and questioned how he can be our ideal instead of Bali. He also opined that **OBC youths should reexamine the '*Gita*', and if it teaches you to follow the duties of '*Chaturvarnya*', you would be required to throw it away. '*Gita*' talks of 'swadharma', which does not mean Hindu or Islam religion, it means '*Chaturvarna dharma*''.** He asked OBCs to evaluate the history of the Buddha through their own values instead of those of Manu, Shankara or Brahmanic books. He asked them to examine their own religion and ask themselves what exactly, it offers them. It offers nothing but slavery, he stressed. ['*Prabuddha Bharat*', 30.4.2000]

Salunkhe averred that it is a false history, taught to us that Shankara defeated Buddhism, but if he had evolved some strategy and helped its decline, not only for Dalits, but also even for people in grass root level, and for those who call themselves as Kshatriyas and for Marathas and Kunbis and OBCs, it was not a golden day of glory but it is was a moment of pushing them into darkness and slavery. He advised that the sufferings of Dalits are the sufferings of OBCs, and *vice versa*. **We are not fighting against any caste, not even Brahmins, but against a system of inequality imposed over Dalits and OBCs by the religious books.** Some OBCs think they are Kshatriyas, and should side with Brahmins because of our scriptures which condemn the 'Shudras' and not the 'Kshatriyas'. Their mentality is to accept the slavery of Brahmins but not to consider Dalits equal to themselves. But if you inspect the reality, you would find that not only Ekalavya and Shambuka suffered but also Tukaram, who was an OBC, suffered. For the scriptures, Dalits and OBCs are both *'Shudras'* and both

deserve condemnation and are deprived from their rights. Today OBCs are projected as neo- Kshatriyas and made to fight against Muslims and Dalits, but they must not forget that they are being used as tools and will the thrown away after their utility ends. **If the merit is important, there is no doubt that Shivaji's merit as a '*Kshatriya*' was proved. Why then his coronation was opposed by the Brahmins of Maharashtra. Today Dalits honour Shivaji and Shahu with full reverence, not as a strategy or convenience, but from the bottom of their hearts, then why OBCs should not honour Ambedkar likewise?** ['*Prabuddha Bharat*', 30.4.2000] Similar views are expressed by him later in "First Maratha Sahitya Sammelan" held very recently at Amravati in Vidarbha. This literary meet of Marathas was highly maligned by Brahmanical press and scholars.

Views of Prakash Ambedkar

He explained the two ideologies in India, one of RSS and other of *'Varkaris'* and stressed importance of unity among the OBCs. He questioned why the post of 'Shankaracharya' is not given to an OBC and suggested to launch an agitation about this in social fora. How much success he gets in his endeavour remains to be seen.

Brahmanic attitude towards Dalitbahujans

Shri Raja Sekhar Vundru describes the attitude of elitist media towards these people.

"Media explosion finds news value in dalits only when they are killed. Dalits do not see themselves as victims of atrocities. Atrocities are part of their daily life. For Dalits persecution is as old as Shambuka, denial as old as Eklavya; revolution as old as Buddha; valor as old as Asura; slavery as old as dasyu and untouchability as old as touch. Nevertheless, Manudharma's tentacles are wide spread and all-compassing." [Raja Sekhar Vundru, "The Pioneer", Dalit Millennium Issue, 30 Jan. 2000]

When Dr. Ambedkar was trying for "Hindu Code Bill", which was to remove the injustice on Hindu women, Jereshastri the then Shankarachrya of Sankeswara Pitha, wrote:

"... Milk or Ganges water may be holy, but if it comes through a *nallah* or a gutter, it can not be considered sacred. Similarly, the 'Dharmasastra' howsoever it may be authentic, it can not be considered authentic because

it has come from a 'Mahar' like Dr. Ambedkar. Ambedkar is a scholar, it is said that his study of scriptures is great, but he is an *'antyaja'*. **How can the Ganga of Scriptures comming from the nallah of Ambekar be holy?** It must be discardable like milk comming from the gutter..."

Quoting this passage from '*Nav Bharat*', daily, 21 Jan. 1950, Yashwant Manohar observes, even the women for whose liberation was this Bill opposed it. We see today these women participating in hindutwavadi organizations. They opposed Mandal Commission, and they still oppose the reservation of OBC and other women, however, they demand right to priesthood. [Yashwant Manohar:, 1999: p.73]

Our religion and Constitution must not have contradictions

In his last speech during Sarnath visit in 1956, Dr. Ambedkar spoke to students, as reported by Nanak Chand Rattu, in Benares University Hall. Speaking on Adi Shankara philosophy, he said that if the *Brahman* pervaded all, a Brahmin and an untouchable were equal. But Shankara did not apply his doctrine of *Brahman* to social organization and kept the discussions only on Vedantic level. Had he applied it on a social level and preached social equality, his proposition would have been profound and worth consideration, in spite of his belief in the world being an illusion. Rattu reports:

"He, therefore, asked the students whether they would follow Hindu scriptures which supported graded inequality propounded by *Purush Sukta* and give religious sanction to social inequality or whether they would stand by the principles of liberty, equality and fraternity propounded in the Constitution, and refute the graded inequality preached by the Hindu scriptures." [Rattu: 1997: 99]

How Buddhist Books reached West

Arrogance and hatred against Buddhism is seen by the fact that around 1816 A.D. after Nepal was settled under British rule, Brian Hodgson came there as Assisant to the Resident in a newly opened Office. He obtained many MSS from Buddhist pundits like Amrutananda, and sent the collection to Asiatic Society of Bengal and to India House in Paris and other libraries. Once, Minister Rana Bahadur Jang of Nepal seized a Buddhist Vihar and threw away all the books in the street. Dr. Wrights, who was Physician to British Resident got it collected and presented to the Cambridge University.

From these sourses Burnuff and his disciple Max Muller compiled early history of Buddhism. [Kasbe: 1996: 315]

How Upnishads reached West

It is also interesting to know that it was Dara Shukoh, brother of Emperor Aurangjeb, who got many Upnishads translated into Persian through pundits of Kashi. These were later translated into Latin. Duparron obtained a copy from a French scholar M. Gentyl in court of Sirajuddolah, and later Burneere took it to France on his trip to Bengal in 1775 A.D., and translated into French, and later published in Latin. Weber commented on these in his "Indian Studies". The South Indian collection was published for the first time in 1851 by W. Elliot in Journal of Asiatic Society in Bengal, and later translated and incorporated in *'Bibliotheca India'*. [Kasbe: 1996: 228]

Jabalopnishad

That the main target of Brahmanism was the OBCs, in ancient times as it is today, is clear from more sourses than one. Kasbe describes one instance where OBCs are equated with impotents etc. According to him, "Jabaloupnishad", which is a later Upnishad, is highly venomous to the orthdox as they believe it planted the seeds of starting of Buddhism and destruction of Vedic religion. The reason was it had allowed renunciation of household duties and accepting the "pravajya" any time, wihout going through the tradional Ashramas. Ahitagni Shankar Ramchandra Rajwade, a Vedic scholar, criticised bitterly this upnishad in his criticism of '*nasdiya sukta bhashya*', saying that when a sentence '*yadahrev virjettdahrev pravajet*' appeared in this upnishad, it paved the way for all the "bungled and botched" 'vratyas', 'patitas' etc. for a life of "Liberty-Equality- Fraternity", thereby reducing the importance of Brahmins in the society. Though Jabalopnishad advocated '*sanyas*' at any age, there were upnishands that time in existence asking for taking sanyas after all three ashramas, and also upnishadas which included the '*Kumbhar*' (potter), and '*Teli*' (oilmen) among the list of those for whom '*sanyas*' was prohibited, like to impotent, outcaste, deaf, dumb etc. [Raosaheb Kasbe, *"manav aani dharm chintan"*, Sugawa, Pune, 1996, p. 223]

A neglected message from Dr. Ambedkar to OBCs

An article was published recently in Marathi local magazine by Suhas Sonwane based on daily *Loksatta*. The following is a gist of it, translated

from Marathi.

Mr. Gawande, a close friend of Dr. Ambedkar, who was then the Law Minister in Nehru Cabinet in 1947, asked for a message for the Maratha people to be published in the Souvenir of "Maratha Mandir" of Bombay. Ambedkar declined saying that he had no relation with the Organization or the Marathas, but on persistent insistence, a message was given and published in the souvenir on 23rd March 1947. It was made available by Shri Vijay Survade recently and was undocumented till now. Dr. Ambedkar said:

"This principle will apply not only to Marathas but all Backward Castes. If they do not wish to be under the thumb of others they should concentrate on two things, one is politics and the other is education."

"One thing I like to impress on you is that the community can live in peace only when it has enough moral but indirect pressure over the rulers. Even if a community is numerically weak, it can keep its pressure over the rulers and create its dominance as is seen by the example of status of present day Brahmins in India. It is essential that such a pressure is maintained, as without it, the aims and policies of the state can not have proper direction, on which depends the development and progress of the state."

"At the same time, it must not be forgotten that education is also important. Not only elementary education but higher education is most essential to keep ahead in competition of communities in their progress."

"Higher education, in my opinion, means that education, which can enable you to occupy the strategically important places in State administration. Brahmins had to face a lot of opposition and obstacles, but they are overcoming these and progressing ahead."

"I can not forget, rather I am sad, that many people do not realize that the Caste system is existing in India for centuries because of inequality and a wide gulf of difference in education, and they have forgotten that it is likely to continue for some centuries to come. This gulf between the education of Brahmins and non-Brahmins will not end just by primary and secondary education. The difference in status between these can only be reduced by higher education. Some non-Brahmins must get highly educated and occupy the strategically important places, which has remained the monopoly of Brahmins since long. I think this is the duty of the State. If the

Govt. can not do it, institutions like "Maratha Mandir" must undertake this task."

"I must emphasize one point here that middle class tries to compare itself with the highly educated and well placed and well to do community, whereas lower class all over the world has same fault. The middle class is not as liberal as upper one, and has no ideology as lower one, which makes it enemy of both the classes. The middle class Marathas of Maharashtra also have this fault. They have only two ways out, either to join hands with upper classes and prevent the lower classes from progress, and the other is to join hands with lower classes and both together destroy the upper class power coming against the progress of both. There was a time, they used to be with lower classes, now they seem to be with the upper class. It is for them to decide which way to go. The future of not only Indian masses but also their own future depends upon what decision the Maratha leaders take. As a matter of fact it all should be left to the skill and wisdom of the leaders of Marathas. But there seems to be a lack of such wise leadership among the Marathas."

What he said about Marathas, equally applies to all OBCs, and still holds true after half a century. Dr. Ambedkar wrote much to educate the OBCs. It is only now that OBCs are awakening gradually. It must not be forgotten that the future of this country depends on them.

Buddhist "Bahujan" meant Non-Brahmin

Vedic social stucture was created for supremacy of Brahmins and it was not possible to liberate all the non-Brahmin masses without destroying it. "Bahujan Samaj" of Buddha was not the middle castes like Kunbis, Telis and Malis but comprised of all non-Brahins - Kunbis Telis to Mang Mahars and Nomadic and ex- Criminal tribes, opined Ambedkarite laureate Yashwant Manohar. ['*Prabuddha Bharat*', 30.4.2000]

OBC Problem

It is not properly realized that the ultimate fate of India depends upon what course of action the OBCs take. The dalits have already made their choice, that they do not wish to lead a life of Slavery under the Brahmins. As a matter of fact, they always wished to free themselves from it one way or the other. **If the present movement of Ambedkar for conversion to Buddhism is sabotaged and if it fails, they would find other**

alternatives. It is for the OBCs to decide what they wish to do, whether to join Ambedkarite movement or to join Brahmanical movement. That the political power in Independent democratic India is mostly in the hands of the OBCs, is technically speaking, true. But the real power evades them. What is the reason? There is a lot of awakening among them, these days, and everybody seems to be searching for the solution, but the real reason is elluding them. The real reason, in our opinion, is that these people are not concerned with their "Cultural Slavery" under the Brahmins.

Examples of Brahmanic hostility towards OBCs OBC youth in Maharashtra had demanded of the Government that certain books which had deroatory remarks about OBCs be banned. The then Govt. of Maharashtra under Sharad Pawar had declared the ban. But perhaps it was not effected. The President of Marathi Sahitya Sammelan held at Panaji (Goa) a few years back, Shri Ram Shewalkar, then criticised the Maharashtra Govt. for this decision as, he claimed, it was against the "freedom of speech", going out of the way by speaking what was not in the written speech.

The then Chairman of the Marathi Sanskruti Mandal, a Govt. organization for promotion of literature, criticised that an OBC saint Tukdoji Maharaj, who played a great role during Independance movement, is termed as *"Rashtra Sant"*, and in his opinion, only a Brahmin saint Ramdas deserved this appellation.

Recently the word "Kunbi" was shown to have been included in a dictionary mentioned having derogatory meaning, for which the publisher had to apologige.

At all these times, OBCs had protested. Sometimes, in their caste functions, they talk of denouncing the Brahmanic slavery. They talk that Eklavya was deceived by Dronacharya, that killing of Shambuka was wrong. But they can not deny the grip of cultural slavery on their minds. They can not demand that the name of Dronacharya given to the highest award in Sports be withdrawn. They can not stop participating in "Ganesh Festival" started by B. G. Tilak, and which was then criticised by the Mahatma Phule's followers in Satya Shodhak Samaj and requested a ban on it.

As a matter of fact, the relationship of dalitbahujans to 'upper' castes in all the political parties run by Brahmins, as various teams from A to E of Brahmanism in Kanshiram's terms, is like Ram and Hanuman, as put

forward by Kancha Ilaiah, whose observation about Congress applies to all parties under Brahmanic control:

"...The Congress was systematically moulded into being a bhadralok party. They talked about the welfare of the Dalitbahujan castes, while all the state resources were cornered by the Hindus. The relationship between an 'upper' caste man and a Dalitbahujan caste man within Congress was like that between Rama and Hanuman. It is a common knowledge that Hanuman was a South Indian Dalit who joined the imperial army of Rama to fight against the South Indian Nationalist ruler - Ravana. Hanuman worked day in and day out in the interest of 'Ramrajya' (an anti-Dalitbahujan and anti-woman kingdom), yet his place in the administration was marginal and subservient. Similarly, all the Dalitbahujan activists who joined the Congress party were given subservient places in the party hierarchy. Their main task was to mobilize the masses, and organize the '*praise melas'* of 'upper' caste Congress leaders in whose name they would carry the party flag. They would organize the photographers to publicize the images of 'upper' caste Congress leaders. The aim of an average 'upper' caste Congress leader would be to mould every Dalitbahujan into a trustworthy Hanuman. While Ambedkarism was creating a small force of conscious people among Dalitbahujans who were trying to organize into an autonomous political force, a large number were (perhaps for the sake of fringe benefits that the Congress administration could offer, perhaps for other reasons) willing to be Hanumans. [p.58]

Kancha Ilaiah, himself an OBC, has very convincingly put forward that the process of "Sanskritisation", i.e. elevating one's own caste, without demolishing the framework of *Chaturvarna* can never end the Brahmanic domination. Describing how various methods of Sanskritisation are futile, he observed:

"...Sanskritization process did not dilute caste identities and caste based humiliations. Many Dalitbahujans who got Sanskritized later realized that Sanskritization is no solution to Hindu barbarity. This is the why Ambedkar embraced Buddhism to build a counterculture to Hinduism(Brahminism), and Periyar Ramasamy Naiker attempted to establish the hegemony of Dravida culture by attacking Hindu culture and Hindu Gods." [Kancha Ilaiah, *"Why I am not a Hindu"*, publ. Samaya, Calcutta, third reprint 1998, p.70]

Kancha Ilaiah, strongly advocates 'dalitization' - signifying dignity of labour rather than of leisure and combining physical and mental knowledge as

dalitbahujans do - rather than hinduization, of the civil society, state and administrative apparatus, which is the real solution to the problems of India. He feels that only through liberation of dalitbahujans that the rest of the society, namely, the 'upper castes' can be liberated. And this process, which could be "very painful and tortuous" should start with addressing to the UC women, who also feel that dalitbahujans are the "others", but are receptive to Dalitbahujan questions, as they seem to prefer "divorce and remarriage" of dalitbahujans to "wife-murder" policy of UCs. [p.129]

Second thing he recommends is the capture of Hindu temples by expelling Brahmins, for the wealth they hold, convert them into centres of public education, taking care that the Brahmanical god culture does not get assimilated into Dalitbahujan culture. It is comparatively easier for neo-Kshatriyas to unlearn many things than baniyas and brahmins, but he warns that this anti-caste revolution may be more tortuous than the 'proletarian cultural revolution' in China. He avers about the NRIs that the post capitalist markets into which these NRIs are integrated did not de-caste them as is very clear from their pro-Hindutva proclamations from abroad. [Kancha, p.131]

Examples of OBC awakening

Apart from Dr. Salunkhe's advice to OBCs, there are other indicaters of OBC awakening. A recent literary meet of "Mana" community in Maharashtra declared themselves to be of "Naaga" clan and associated themselves with the Buddhist culture, denying the Brahmanic one. The important Adivasis are already dissociating themselves from the hindutvavadis and associating with Ambedkarites, in spite of strong propaganda by BSO of converting them into "Vanavasis". Everybody is realizing that the way of liberation is the fight against the caste and Brahmin supremacy.

Ambedkar's Efforts for Adivasis

All these people are now realizing that Dr. Ambedkar had struggled a lot for Adivasis also. We must strive for upliftment of BCs and Adivasis said Dr. Ambedkar. The purpose of keeping them in sub-clause (2) of Hindu Code Bill was to make some provision for them and Hindu Law would "apply to them only if it is proved that Hindu customs and Hindu usages are prevallent in that class", and it will not apply to them unless "they have

adopted the customs." [W&S, vol. 14 part 2, p.886-7]

Ambedkar asked for right of Adult franchise for Adivasis, in 1928, Simon Commision Statemnt, commenting that Legislatures are the places where "social battles have to be fought, previlages have to be destroyed, and rights have to be won". He avered that their illeteracy should not come in way of giving them right to vote, as even an illiterate is intellegent and knows his welfare. [W&S, vol.2, p.471]

Disagreeing with the Britishers' idea of keeping the Adivasis segregated, during the evidence taken before the joint Committee on Indian Constitutional Reforms in 1933, he professed the ideal that these primitive people should not remain primitive and they should cease to be an isolated part of humanity and take part in the public affairs of this country like others. That they must not loose their lands and be landless labourers and their lands be protected from money lendes by suitable Laws. The education is more neccesary for BCs and Adivasis, more than anybody else, he said, and wanted adequate representation for them in legislature assuring the friendship of many BCs. [W&S, vol.2, p.737 ff.]

Stand of "Dalit Voice"

V. T. Rajshekhar, for last three years or so is recommending that each caste should consolidate itself and advocates breaking of SCs into some categories for purpose of reservations also, **he claims this will destroy Brahmanism, a tall claim which is based on unproven logic.** Everybody is entitled to his own opinion. But the tragic part is he ascribes his logic to Kanshiram and Mayawati and erroneously says they also subscribe to this view. The present author has repeatedly opposed this stand, so have many prominent Ambedkarites including Bhoja Tarakam and N. G. Uke.

"Jati Todo Samaj Jodo"

One of the senior Ambedkarites, Dr. Vellu Annamalai from USA ascribes motives of vested interests to VTR's attitude. This may or may not be true, but one thing is sure that Mayawati and Kanshiram do not ascribe to this view. They talk of "*Jati Todo Samaj Jodo*", which does not mean, as VTR seems to suggest, that they advocate consolidation of each caste. On the contrary, they say break your own caste, forget about wellbeing of only your caste and strive for making up a "*Bahujan Samaj*" identity, which alone can convert the minority into majority as Brahmanism has broken the society

into various castes numbering about six thousand. It should be our aim to unite these various castes into one identity of "Bahujan". They believe that political solution is the most important method and quote Ambedkar that political power is the master key to all the ailments of non-Brahmins. They point out to the tremendous work that has been done in U.P. in a short span of her rule there. They have not tried to strengthen only Chamar caste, as is presumed by VTR. They have asked to strengthen all Bahujans to come together and work for common good of all Bahujans including dalits. They never worked for "separate but equal" castes. Neither Dr. Ambedkar, nor Shahu, nor Phule worked on the lines mentioned by VTR. They always worked to bring all together, demolishing walls among the castes, never ever, they advocated salvation of any individual caste or that of an individual person within a caste. A well known letter by Dr. Ambedkar to a Mang youth is proof thereof.

G. P. Deshpande, Prof. Of International politics at JNU and a theater personality in Delhi advises that a caste-group is never a leader and Dr. Ambedkar never thought so either. What he identified was central contradiction in Indian society epitomised in and by the Varna and Jati system. The transformative movement that India needs so badly today should take note of this understanding. Ambedkar's relevance lies precisely in this approach in building a wider social base. The present Dalit movement, Deshpande comments, is yet to define itself and demonstrate that it is conscious of the whole within which it is to function, and avers that it has as much relevance for Savarnas and upper castes as it has for the Dalits and other classes. He concludes:

"Dalits, today, have to realise that it is all a question of hegemony. He also has to realise that in matters of politics and culture, he will provide leadership only if his politics is of genuine *'jatyanta'* (end of caste). **Interests of caste have to be secondary to the interests of end of caste.**" [G. P. Deshpande, "The Pioneer", Dalit Millennium Issue, 30 Jan. 2000]

Kancha Ilaiah

He laments that dalitbahujans are the oldest people of the globe, and yet have no calender of their own and a largest group in the world without the own individual dates of birth. They invented through their scientific approach to production by counting seeds, birds and animals the 'concept of zero', which was "patented" by Bana Bhatta, an Aryan Brahmin. These first invaders, the Aryan Hindus, condemned the discovery of tool making,

leather making, and wool weaving as Chandala processes.

The degradation of dalitbahujans was achieved through two methods - *danda* and *mantra*, first 'Danda' i.e. violence and second 'Mantra' i.e. by developing the consent systems. As an example of second, he observes:

"Did not Hinduism(Brahminism) make us do the same thing when it forced us to celebrate the birthday of Rama as Ramnavami, a dateless day, a man who killed my ancestors Tataka, Vali, Shambhuka and Ravana, and cut off the nose and earlobes of most beautiful woman of India, Shurpanakha? Jesus Christ's noble soul did not kill even his enemies. What a difference in godhood." [Kancha Ilaiah, "The Pioneer", 30 Jan. 2000]

"Post independent India has not given the dalitbahujans anything except a saga of atrocities. The Hinduism(Brahminism) that rendered this country calenderless is forcing all dalitbahujans to call themselves Hindus. I made my position very clear that "I am not a Hindu" as I cannot worship the very gods who killed my ancestors. **My predicament is that of Angada, the son of Bali who was killed by Rama and while his father's dead body lying there he was forced to worship the killer of his father, Rama. I refuse to do that.**" [Kancha Ilaiah, "The Pioneer", 30 Jan. 2000]

Describing the sufferings of dalitbahujans for last two thousand years, Kancha Ilaiah describes:

"In the first millennium, the Shudras along with the Chandalas suffered all kinds of atrocities at the hands of the Hindu rulers who constructed a *Swarna Yuga* (golden age) of their own during political rule of Guptas. It was during this period that the scientific temper the Shudras constructed among themselves was destroyed and they were pushed into most dark period of their life. During the first millennium Manu Dharma as law and Kauttilya's brutal state craft were brought into force and they destroyed all the creative ability of the Shudras, Chandalas and Adivasis (SCAs). Except the text '*Mritchakatika*' by Shudraka, all other texts including *'Megha Sandesha'* by Kalidasa were written in the image of Brahmanical leisure-centered classes. The history of SCAs from then was rendered invisible and non-existent." [Kancha Ilaiah, "The Pioneer", 30 Jan. 2000]

"... By the beginning of the second millennium, Brahmins, Kshatriyas, Vaishyas (BKVs) had eaten away the vitals of Subcontinent. These three leisure and pleasure centered castes lived in celestial and spiritual luxuries

and sexual orgies. During this period, the BKVs destroyed the Buddhist ethical and productive life and also symbols of that civilization and errected erotic temples translating the sexual pleasure-centered discourse of Vatsayana's *'Kamasutra'* culture into sculpture at the cost of enormous labour power of the unpaid sculptors. All the sculptors came from the SCA backgrounds. Investment of wealth and labour on constructing structures like Khajuraho and Konark reflected the negative cultural mould of the ruling castes/classes. No single structure that reflected the productive culture of people was errected during the period." [Kancha Ilaiah, "The Pioneer", 30 Jan. 2000]

Gail Omvedt

Today as India heads into new millennium, its own sixth millennium of civilization, it has no clear vision of where it is going, kind of society it wants and how it proposes to build it, she laments and emphasizes, the fervor of freedom fighters and Nehruvian socialism are gone and "Gandhian version of Hinduism(Brahminism) is empty now", and its modern '*avatar*', the environmentalists wish the revival of traditional forms of production and culture in the form of "Ram Raj". She feels that neither Gandhism, nor socialism are more than empty terms in India, and Hindutva Nationalism alternative is itself based upon the Brahmanic version of Indian tradition. She recommends five new visions for the Dalitbahujan masses of India:

"1. Alternative enlightenment" - based on moralism, rationalism, whether religious or aesthetic or agnostic, a genuine democratic socialism can have its roots only in "Ambedkar's Buddhism".

"2. Alternative spirituality" - "...Even before Ambedkar chose Buddhism in 1956, it had emerged with Pandit Iyothee Thass and Tamil Buddhism; with Srilanka's Anagarika Dharmapala, Brahmanand Reddy of Andhra and Acchutananda of Uttar Pradesh. Phule took Buddhism as an important source of 'shudra-ati-shudra' tradition. ..."

"3. Alternative Economics" - "...Ambedkar's economic trajectory went from conventional welfare liberal economics in twenties to endorsement of state socialism that lasted upto 1947, to a final disillusionment of Soviet model and efforts to seek alternative Buddhist economics, described variously as democratic socialism, liberal socialism, a mixed economy or simply as beyond labels. ..."

"4. Alternative Nationalism" - Only Ambedkar realized the need for English to unite all dalits in India. "This illustrates that real nationalism in India must (be) realized in the language of the people, not in the Sanskritised Hindi taught in schools or link language of cinema."

"5. Empowerment of women" - In contrast to Brahmanic subordination of women, Dalitbahujan leaders projected a vision of women as equal citizens with rights to individual fulfillment. [Gail Omvedt, "The Pioneer", 30 Jan. 2000]

V. P. Singh

Asked about effects of globalization on Dalits, he remarked that he was not in favour of blind liberalization, but certain licenses, quotas and regulations have to go. However state can not refrain from human investment. Second stage of justice should be education, which is a key to empowerment. With commercialization of education, future decision makers will come only from effluent sections. Social justice is a continuous, self corrective process, where the neglected will fight and correct the system. [V. P. Singh "The Pioneer", 30 Jan. 2000]

Hindu Muslim Unity

Arvind Das, the editor of New Delhi review journal, "Biblio", commenting on the attitude of elites, observe that any of those who demand that Christians apologize for the Inquisition or Muslims be sorry for being designated *"Babur ki aulad"* do not express the slightest regret for the centuries of oppression that they have practiced on the dalits, and there is only a thundering silence in that respect. [Arvind Das, "The Pioneer", 30 Jan.2000]

Syed Shahabuddin, editor of Muslim India and former M.P. observes that the Draft constitution had declared Muslims and SCs as minorities and provided reservations for both. But Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel moved resolution and Muslims were denied facilities. He observes:

"... The goal of Dalit Muslim unity is neither racial kinship nor religious uniformity but political unity. ... Even if the forward Shudras were not included, the EBCs (the Backward backwards), SCs, STs, and Muslims alone form about 67.5 percent of the population. ... a majority that lives below the poverty line. They own less than 15 per cent of national resources and have a long way to go before they become equal partners in

the national enterprise - in power sharing as well as effective participation in decision making." [Syed Shahabuddin, "The Pioneer", 30 Jan. 2000]

He advocates alliance of deprived, but thinks it is unrealistic to think on national level. But in MLA segments, where the strength of these people exceeds fifty percent, it can be tried. In UP BSP and in Maharashtra RPI represent Dalits, but there is no party of Muslims anywhere, he laments, and stresses the need for "composite leadership". He also stresses the need of common agenda, and feels that the Brahmanical order is on the decline, but not so Brahmanism. He laments that every emergent class tends to be reborn as a Neo-Brahmin aspiring for social domination. Those who stand for social justice cannot accept such succession and, therefore, the battle for Identity, Dignity and Equality will go on, he avers. [Syed Shahabuddin, "The Pioneer", 30 Jan. 2000]

Communism and Dalitbahujans

A lot has been written by Dr. Ambedkar discarding Communist idiology. Prof. T. K. Oomen at JNU, explains layers of Dalit movement. There are people who concentrate on economic side and others on caste basis. But he feels that all Dalits are not proletarians and a small substratum among this traditionally unprivileged class has undergone a process of elitisation. In addition, Dalit consciousness is qualitatively different from proletarian or caste consciousness. Stressing the importance of cultural enlightenment, he comments that **it is no accident that Dalit protests in India first crystallized against socio- cultural oppression like untouchability, which was followed by mobilization for political enfranchisement and finally protests against economical exploitations were heard.** [T. K. Oomen, "The Pioneer", 30 Jan. 2000]

Dalit Unity is not enough

Without in any way denigrating the efforts of those who are striving for Dalit Unity, I feel, even if all the Dalits of India, of all castes, shades and colours, unite, they cannot achieve any power without the help of other oppressed castes, as they are only about 16% or so. And if there is no power, caravan of Ambedkar will be on retrograde journey. Many non-dalit non- brahmin castes are realizing the mischief done by Caste system, they are having dialogue with Dalits and uniting with them, as is seen in North Indian states. And the message is spread broad and wide and all regions of this country

are awakening.

Should we not destroy our identity?

Are various leaders ready to give up their identities on argument that Dalit liberation must get priority over all other demands? One does not have to give up ones identity, if we are talking at this stage of only political unity. But if we unite only politically at this stage, a time will come, when we have to unite religiously and socially also. At that time, I would like to ask these leaders, "Can they afford not to dissolve their identities?" If they did, their castes would be wiped out by the BSO. One has only to see the way these sub-castes are fighting among themselves just for crumbs, they have forgotten that their real enemy, BSO, is safe and secure in its own citadel. Even at this stage, infighting among the sub-castes is counter productive and injurious to the interest of their own caste.

Role of Jains and Osho

There are always some sporadic news items keep appearing in papers that, some youths have started a social movement to assert that Jains are not Hindus. We read that at one time Jainism was a revolutionary religion, and they had to suffer for it at the hands of BSO. K.A.N.Sastri tells us how eight thousand Jains were put to death by impalement by a Saiva King and how a festival is celebrated every year, even now, to commemorate this event in a temple at Madura. [K. Jamanadas, "Tirupati Balaji was a Buddhist Shrine" p.134]. Whether same revolutionary spirit will be revived among the Jains again, is more than I can predict.

I only know of one Jain revolutionary in modern times. He is Osho Rajnish, who said about the glass of orange juice given by Robindranath Tagore to break the fast of M. Gandhi at the conclusion of Poona Pact, "But this orange juice, this one glass of orange juice, contains millions of people's blood!" [*"Dr. Ambedkar aur Osho"*, Hindi, by Sandesh Bhalekar p. 43] He had the courage to denounce Manu in no uncertain terms that if we could forget Manusmriti whole world would call us more liberal and broad minded; Manu is sitting on our chest like a big stone. [p.51] Some Ambedkarite scholars like Lokhande and Bhalekar project him as 'in lineage of Phule, Shahu and Ambedkar'. Other equally prominent scholars like Yashwant Manohar call such projections as pollution (pradushan) in Dalit literature. What role, if any, the followers of Osho, the world over, will play in opposing BSO in future, is a question better left alone for the future generations to

work out.

Future of Buddhism in India

The struggle for destruction of Caste is the precursor of the spread of Buddhism, but need not be a precondition. Equitable distribution of land and fast implementation of Land Reforms is the need of the day. They know that this will dilute the hegemony of Brahmins, and so such reforms are not implemented. With this attitude, one may contrast the honesty of the British, who knew that imparting education to lower castes will, one day, enable these people to drive away the alien rulers, but still they did not keep us ignorant. Under such circumstances we conclude this tract with the prophesy of Dr. Ambedkar about future of Indian Buddhism.

After comparing Buddhism with Hinduism(Brahminism), while comparing Buddhism with other non-Hindu religions, Dr. Ambedkar observes:

(i) The society must have either the sanction of law or the sanction of morality to hold it together. Without either society is sure to go pieces. He explains that in all societies law plays a very small part. It is intended to keep the minority within the range of social discipline. The majority is left and has to be left to sustain its social life by the postulates and sanction of morality. **Religion in the sense of morality, must therefore, remain the governing principle in every society.**

(ii) That religion as defined in the first proposition must be in accord with science. Religion is bound to lose its respect and therefore become the subject of ridicule and thereby not merely lose its force as a governing principle of life but might in course of time be disintegrated and lapse if it is not in accord with science. **In other words, religion if it is to function, must be in accord with reason which is merely another name for science.**

(iii) That religion as a code of social morality, **must recognize the fundamental tenets of liberty, equality and fraternity.** Unless a religion recognize these three fundamental principles of social life religion will be doomed.

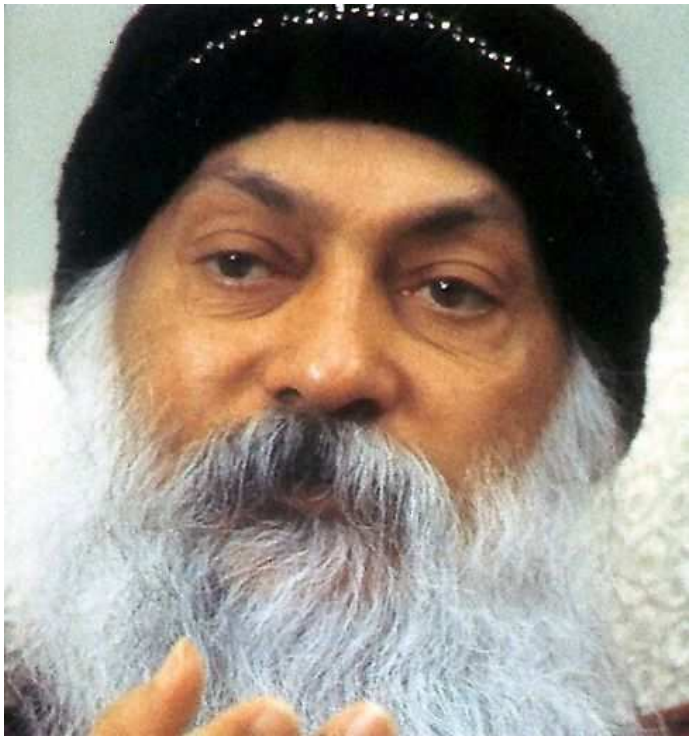
(iv) **That religion must not sanctify or ennoble poverty.** Renunciation of riches by those who have it may be a blessed state. But poverty can never be. To declare poverty to be a blessed state is to pervert religion, to

perpetuate vice crime, to consent to make earth a living hell.

Which religion fulfills all these requirement, he asks, emphasing that the days of the Mahatmas are gone and the world cannot have a new Religion and choice is limited to existing ones, and avers that the only religion which satisfies all these tests is Buddhism. Buddhism is the only religion which the whole world can have. The new world needs religion far more than the old world did, and it can only be religion of the Buddha. The confusion is because most of those who have written about the Buddha have propagated the idea that the only thing Buddha taught was Ahimsa. Without minimizing its importance, as it is a great doctrine and the world can not be saved unless it, he emphasized that Buddha taught many other things besides Ahimsa. He observed:

"... He taught as a part of religion, social freedom, intellectual freedom, economic freedom and political freedom. He taught equality, equality between man and man but between man and woman. It would be difficult to find a religious teacher to compare with Buddha whose teachings embrace so many aspects of the social life of a people whose doctrines are so modern and whose main concern was to give salvation to man in his life on earth and not to promise it to him in heaven after he is dead." [Buddha and future of his religion", p. 9]

Appendix-1
BAHUJAN REVOLUTION,MANU PLANNING AND BRAHMINS -BY OSHO RAJNEESH



So everybody is satisfied deep down, and that's why revolution never happened in India, and cannot happen. In every country where revolution happens, it is the intelligentsia of the country which provokes it. They don't do the revolution, but they give the ideology. But in India the brahmin is the intelligentsia. Every revolution will go against him; naturally, he cannot give the ideology of revolution. He will give ideologies that prevent any dream of revolution, of change. Of course the king, the warriors, cannot be in favor of revolution because it is going to be against them. They will be thrown out of their thrones. The businessmen cannot be for revolution, either, because all revolutions are against the rich.

And the poor man cannot even imagine revolution, because he has not been allowed any kind of education. He has been prohibited from any contact with the society of the three higher classes. He lives outside the town: he cannot live inside the town. The poor people's wells are not deep, they cannot put much money into making wells. The businessmen have big, deep wells and the king has his own; but even in times when rains have not come and his wells are dry, the sudra is not allowed to take water from any other well. He may have to go ten miles to fetch water from a river.

He is so hungry that it is difficult to manage one meal a day, which has no nourishment in it – how can he think of revolution? He knows that this is his fate. He has been told and conditioned by the priest that this is his fate: "God has given you an opportunity to show your trust. This poverty is nothing, it is a question of a few years. If you can remain faithful, great is the reward." So on the one hand the priest goes on preaching to them against any change, and on the other hand they cannot conceive of change because they are undernourished.

And you have to understand one thing: that the undernourished person loses intelligence. Intelligence blossoms only when you have everything that your body needs, plus something more. That plus becomes your intelligence,because intelligence is a luxury. A person who has only one meal a day has nothing, no energy left for intelligence to grow. It is the intelligentsia that creates the ideas, new philosophies, new ways of life, new dreams for the future; but that intelligentsia is already on the top. In fact, India has done something of tremendous importance: no other country has been able to maintain the status quo in such a scientific way. And you will be surprised;the man who did it was Manu. After five thousand years, his sutras are still followed exactly.

In this century, only two persons outside India have appreciated Manu.One is Friedrich Nietzsche, the other is Adolf Hitler. Adolf Hitler was a disciple of Friedrich Nietzsche. Friedrich Nietzsche was the philosopher of Nazism: Adolf Hitler was simply practicing what Nietzsche had preached. The relationship is exactly as between Marx and Lenin. Marx was the philosopher who gave the whole ideology of communism, and Lenin put it into reality. The same was the relationship between Friedrich Nietzsche and Adolf Hitler.It is not a coincidence that they should both appreciate a book written five thousand years before in India. Both appreciated it because they could see what a grand master-planner Manu must have been, to have made a system that is still alive. He prevented revolution for five thousand years, and perhaps he will prevent it forever. There may never be a revolution in India.

Source: Book Title: The Last Testament, Vol. 2. // Chapter 6: The Intelligent Way
http://www.osho.com/library/online-library-revolution-lenin-india-f65a91d0-351.aspx

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